THE NEW YORK LEDGER

DEVOTED TO CHOICE LITERATURE ROMANCE THE NEWS AND COMMERCE

VOL. XXVIII. ROBERT BONNER, COR. OF WILLIAM AND SPRUCE STS. SATURDAY, JULY 6, 1872. TERMS. $3 PER ANNUM, IN ADVANCE. NO. 20.

THE DAIRY-MAID.

BY NATHAN D. URNER.

She is not in the house, but her mother says,
With a twinkling light in her kind old eyes,
That down at the dairy she, loitering, stays;
And thither I creep to give a surprise—
Down the woodland path that takes a turn
By the spring house, then on for a rod or more,
When the clattering noise of a beating churn
Guides me on to the deep-set dairy door.

I will venture for once to be over-bold,
And view the sweet toil of her small brown hands
That brings the butter as yellow as gold;
But softly! for there in her beauty she stands.
She stands by the churn in her simple dress,
And my eyes give a quiver, and then in stealth
Devour her robust comeliness
Of delicate color and boundless health.

A livelier blush from the exercise
Is mantling over her fair young cheek;
Her heart beams out through her splendid eyes,
Then they flutter and droop as my own they seek.
Then she drops her task with a frightened air,
And smooths her apron in maiden fear,
Pouting and laughing: "It was not fair
For mother to send you to seek me here!"

"Nay, sweetheart, give me your berry-brown hand,
And give me your cherry-ripe lips to kiss!
Do you fancy I deem you less fair as you stand
In your work-day dress, and at labor like this?
Leave your hair alone—it is pretty enough,
And shadows your neck with an Oread grace;
Your little Swiss apron of dark-blue stuff
Becomes your beauty of form and face.

"Your teeth are white as the surf in the bay,
Your eyes are blue as the billow at rest;
Your breath is sweet as the new-mown hay
When the moon of the harvest rides low in the west.
Your soul is pure and as crystal-clear
As the cool spring water that round us drips,
And yourself, my own, to my heart more dear
Than can ever be told by mortal lips.

"Here let me watch the sweet butter rolled
Into golden shapes by your dainty hands,
And then we will back to the farm-house old,
Through the wooded path by the pasture-lands.
Proud am I that she who my life will control
Can work, and be glad, and be never afraid;
For in womanly beauty of body and soul
There are none to compare with my Dairy-Maid!"

* * *

THE BLACK DOCTOR;

OR, THE

Prophecy of the Voodoo King.

AN HISTORICAL TALE OF THE SPANISH RULE IN LOUISIANA.

By WILLIAM HENRY PECK,
Professor of History in the University of the State of Louisiana.

CHAPTER III.

SOMETHING OF MERCITA.

"Madame," said Scipian, as her eye met his, "how long hath Mr. Adrian occupied that room?"

"It used to be the bedroom of Mr. Leon—"

"Madame's other grandson?"

"Yes. Mr. Adrian's bedroom then adjoined it. On the 29th of last month—"

"Two days before the illness of Madame?"

"Two days before that day, Mr. Leon selected a room in another part of the house, and Mr. Adrian took that which had been Mr. Leon's. What of this?"

"Presently, Madame. It was not known to you, to Mr. Adrian, nor to any one of your household, that Mr. Leon was going away?"

"No, Scipian. Why do you ask?"

"Presently, Madame. It was not known to any of the household until the next day, that is, until May 2d, that Mr. Leon had left the city a few hours before your illness?"

"No one. A note written by Mr. Leon on the evening of May 1st, addressed to me, and stating simply that he was going to Mobile, and probably to be absent for a week and more, was not delivered here until the next day."

"Then, Madame," said Scipian, bowing until his orchestra chimed briskly, "the poisoned fruit and sangaree, if not poisoned by a member of your household, may not have been intended for Mr. Adrain, but for Mr. Leon."

"You amaze me, Scipian," exclaimed Madame Ruth, again startled. "What do you mean?"

"I mean, Madame, that since none of your household knew of the absence of Mr. Leon, it is very probable that all not of the household knew nothing of the fact that the two young gentlemen no longer occupied the respective bedrooms they had been in the custom of using."

"That is very probable, Scipian. The domestic matters of the Varlville household are of course kept very private."

"Then, if the confection was poisoned by one ignorant of the fact that the bedroom was no longer Mr. Leon's, it was the life of Mr. Leon that was aimed at."

"Certainly; if the poisoning was done by one not of the household, and unaware that the room had been taken by Mr. Adrian. And I hope—O Heaven grant it!—if any premeditated crime was intended, I hope none of my household is guilty."

"Assassination was intended, Madame. I am sure of that," said Scipian. "Does Madame suspect any one of her household?"

"None. How could I?"

"Madame, is not the same confection placed every night in the separate bedrooms of the young gentlemen?"

"Yes; whenever they are expected to be at home."

"So, of course, on the night of the 1st, sliced and sugared orange and a flagon of sangaree were placed in the bedroom of Mr. Leon?"

"I have no doubt of it. Yet, to be assured, I will ring for Mercita;" and Madame Ruth reached toward the bell cord.

But Scipian said quickly:

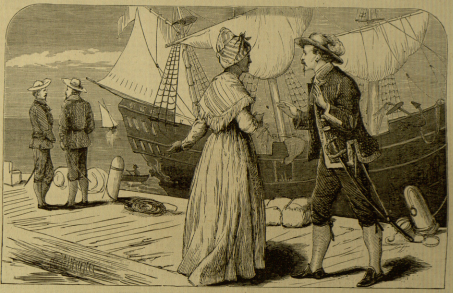
"Do not, Madame. I know that the usual confection was placed in the room of Mr. Leon."

"You know it?"

"Yes, Madame, as I looked in that room, on the night of the 1st. The confection was there; and, Madame, like that in the room of Mr. Adrian, it was impregnated with the poison of which you partook."

"You are sure of that?" demanded Madame Ruth, starting nearly to her feet.

ENTERED ACCORDING TO ACT OF CONGRESS, IN THE YEAR 1872, BY ROBERT BONNER, IN THE OFFICE OF THE LIBRARIAN OF CONGRESS, AT WASHINGTON.



MERCITA THREATENING CAPTAIN SANCHO PEREZ WITH ARREST.

"As sure as I am that I live," replied Scipian firmly, and with a shake of his head that made his bells clash sharply.

"Thank God!" exclaimed Madame Ruth.

"Oh," said Scipian, as if amazed by this ejaculation of gratitude and joy.

"I have my reasons, Scipian, for thanking God that the confection prepared for both of my grandsons was poisoned; or rather, that as that of one was poisoned, the other was also."

"Oh, yes," mentally added Madame Ruth, "rather would I see them both dead, and by the poison of an assassin, than that either should live to be the slayer of the other."

"She suspected," thought Scipian, though he was careful to give no sign of the thought, "that Leon de Vargas poisoned the confection in Adrian Dudley's room. Now, since she has been told that the confection in Mr. Leon's room was also poisoned, she thanks God, because she no longer thinks Leon is guilty."

"Now," said Madame Ruth, her dark eyes flashing with a terrible rage and desire to punish the unknown assassin, "it is plain that the lives of both of my grandsons were attempted! Is it not so, Adraste Scipian?"

"Undoubtedly, perhaps—but yet," replied Scipian, and pausing.

"But yet what?"

"It is my belief, Madame," and again the Voodoo doctor bowed nearly to the floor, "that more than two lives were menaced by that poison."

"More than two!"

"Yes, Madame. Three."

"Three! Whose is the third life that was attacked, Scipian?"

"The life that should be sacred to all," replied Scipian, with one of his lowest bows. "The life of Madame."

"My life!"

"Your life, Madame."

"What!" exclaimed Madame Ruth, now greatly agitated. "Do you assert that an attempt was made to poison my two grandsons and me?"

"Is it not the custom of Madame to visit the bedrooms of each of her grandsons ere she sleeps, every night, to chat a little with each, and to eat a little of the confection of each?"

"That is true, Scipian. Such has been my habit for years."

"And of so long a continuance, Madame, that it might readily be known to persons not of Madame's household?"

"I see, Scipian, that you suspect the guilt of some one not of my household. But wait. I am willing to admit that I was poisoned. But what proof can you show me to make me, or any one, believe that the confection in Mr. Leon's room would have harmed me, or any one, had I partaken of that instead of Mr. Adrian's? What proof, Scipian?"

Scipian bowed nearly to the floor; he shook his head so that his bells danced, leaped and clashed, and in a deep, solemn tone, replied in one word:

"Death!"

"Good Heaven! what does the man mean?" cried Madame Ruth, shuddering. "Did any one partake of the confection in Mr. Leon's room on the night of the first?"

"Yes, Madame."

"And—and died?" asked Madame Ruth, in a whisper, for louder speech she could not use at that moment.

"And died, Madame."

"By the poison?"

"By the poison undoubtedly, Madame."

Madame Ruth, almost stupefied with dismay, grief, terror and surprise, seemed about to swoon.

Scipian drew a vial from one of his many pockets, advanced to the table, let fall a few drops of the contents of the vial into a small glass spoon, and gave it to Madame Ruth, saying:

"Madame will not hesitate to take a stimulant from one who has saved her life from a poison that killed one of her slaves."

"It was one of my servants, not one of my grandsons, that died?"

"One of Madame's servants."

"I feared—for I have seen neither of my grandsons since the first of May—that it was being kept from me that either Leon or Adrian was poisoned," sighed Madame Ruth, but not taking the medicine offered by Scipian. "No—I will not take any more of your medicine, Scipian," she said firmly, though shuddering. "I am strong again. Man, I—I seem to be inhaling poison in the very air."

"Madame is a little nervous. She smells the pungent odor of this essence, which is harmless," said Scipian, who then doubled the quantity in the spoon and swallowed the stimulant himself.

"I need no medicine now, Scipian. Which one of my servants was so unfortunate?"

"Death to the very old and very infirm is never a misfortune, Madame. The one that died was an old woman named, I think, Media."

"Media? The mother of my servant Priam? Old Media?"

"Yes, Madame."

"Poor old harmless creature!" said Madame Ruth, with a sigh. "Poor old Media!—she was a famous Voodoo doctress in her day."

Scipian shrugged his shoulders at this last remark.

"But," continued Madame Ruth, "I must speak with Mercita;" and as she spoke she pulled the bell cord, which hung near her.

"Madame," said Scipian quickly, "no one except Madame and Adraste Scipian and the poisoner—whoever the poisoner may be—is aware that Madame has had this narrow escape from poison, or that Media died by poison."

"The affair shall be keenly investigated by police detectives, Scipian."

"In that case, Madame, Adraste Scipian will be mute."

He bowed as humbly as ever, but there was a firmness of will in his voice which somewhat startled Madame Ruth.

"You will be mute! You assert that a poisoner has been at work in this house—that I was poisoned—that my servant Media died from poison, and you will not testify in the matter!"

"Madame, it is true that I am not a slave; yet what am I in the eye of the law but a free negro? Of what worth will my evidence be in a court of justice? Alarm the guilty person and the guilty will escape—and perhaps I shall be murdered. As the matter now stands, who will believe a Voodoo doctor? Ask no aid except mine, Madame, and I doubt not that the affair shall be placed finally in such a condition that you can punish the guilty by means of the law. Give no hint to any one to-day, that a poisoner is even suspected to have been at work in the Varlville Mansion. This is the favor I had to ask."

"I consent—that is, for the present, Scipian. Ah, here is Mercita," replied Madame Ruth; and as she spoke, Mercita the mulattress entered the room.

We have said that Mercita the mulattress was a woman of middle age. She was tall and graceful in form, but her skin was very dark—so dark that she could not properly be called a mulattress.

The mulatto proper is one half of African, and one half of Caucasian blood. The quadroon is one quarter of African, and three quarters of Caucasian blood. The octoroon is one-eighth of African, and seven eighths of Caucasian blood.

Mercita, not black enough to be called a negress, and too black to be properly called a mulattress, had such decided Caucasian features that had her skin been as fair as that of an octoroon, she could anywhere have passed for a full-blooded Caucasian.

Her features, though replete with traces of great care and mental pain, and though she was perhaps nearer forty than thirty, were still very regular, and even beautiful in some respects. Her eyes, usually downcast, and their expression vailed by their lowered lids, would have been exceedingly beautiful but for a profound sadness that at all times characterized them.

Her voice was always soft, gentle, and scarcely audible to those not in daily communication with her.

Her brow, even to her eyes, was always hidden by the heavy folds of a bandana turban, silk in material, and dark crimson, with black stripes, in color.

This turban, a kind of head-dress universally worn by women of her caste, also so covered her head that nothing of its shape and hair could be seen.

Before we relate that which was said after she entered the White Room, let us speak of something that happened twelve years before, when Sancho Perez, a slave dealer, had a slave mart in Havana, Cuba.

Our story goes back twelve years.

Perez was sauntering along one of the streets of Havana, smoking a cigar, and noting in his note-book certain sales which he had made that day, when a negro boy touched him on the arm, and gave him a sealed note.

The boy ran away instantly. At the same moment a vailed lady who had watched the boy until the latter delivered the note, also vanished from that street on which Perez was walking.

Perez glanced at the superscription of the note, and seeing that it was in the hand of a lady, smiled complacently, and muttered:

"This is an invitation to an interview, no doubt, from some fair one. Ha! how delightfully perfumed it is!" he added, as he broke the seal. "But I have no time to spare."

A pleasant smile of self-conceit was upon his bronzed and not unhandsome features as he broke the seal. A grin of dismay and a pallor of sudden terror came over them, as he perused the delicately written lines that met his eye.

The lines were these, in Spanish:

"Sancho Perez will immediately prepare to go to New Orleans in his schooner, *The Doubloon*. He will be alone in the private office of his slave mart to-morrow, at six o'clock P. M. A negro man will leave a small trunk at the same office, at a quarter past six. A mulatto woman will accompany the negro. The negro will depart unquestioned by Sancho Perez. Sancho Perez will embark in *The Doubloon* with the mulattress at seven o'clock P. M. to-morrow. She will give him another letter from the writer of this. Failing to thus embark, and to keep the matter as secret as possible, Sancho Perez will be arrested at five minutes past seven P. M. to-morrow. Failing to begin to-day to prepare to depart to-morrow, he will be arrested within three hours after he reads this note. The charge under which he will be arrested is murder on the high seas. This from one who saw and can prove the deed."

There was no signature to the note, but it contained a bill of the Bank of Spain, of a very large amount.

"She saw it!" muttered Perez, as he wiped a cold and sudden perspiration from his face. "She? Who? Undoubtedly this was penned by a woman. The crew were all asleep when I did it. Not one suspected the deed. I made sure of that. No one saw me go on deck. But here is proof that some one did see me. But there was no woman aboard. And not one of the crew could write more than his name, if so much. What must I think? What shall I do?"

The bank-note, crisp and new, crackled in his tremulous grasp.

"Oh, first I will see if this note is genuine," muttered Perez, as he hurried from the spot. "If it is—why, then I must obey the unknown. There was no woman on the schooner, unless—ha!—unless she was disguised as a man. Ha! I have it," said he, halting, and striking his forehead with his fist. "The old negro that took my cook's place, when the latter fell sick at San Domingo—that pretended old negro must have been a woman in disguise—if a woman saw the deed—for all others of the crew were known to me, and are now in this city. But first let me see if this bank-note is good. If it is, why, the unknown pays well. I could charter two schooners for a voyage to New Orleans for less gold than this note calls for."

He hurried to the office of the nearest money-broker. The latter, after a careful examination of the note, said:

"It is genuine."

"You will give me the amount in gold?"

"Where did you get it?"

"What is that to you, since the note is good and payable to bearer?"

"Oh, nothing, Señor Perez. I asked from mere curiosity," replied the money-broker, who was a Jew. "You obtained it from a Spanish naval officer, of course."

"Oh—and why from a Spanish naval officer, of course?" asked Perez, with affected carelessness.

"One told me that it was very probable that you—"

"That I!"

"That Captain Sancho Perez would call here and ask if a certain note on the bank of Spain was genuine."

"This same note?"

"Yes, Señor; no doubt. A note of the Royal Bank of Spain, No. 13,721—see—the same—13,721—with this mark on the upper right-hand corner of the note."

The mark pointed out by the money-broker was shaped like a St. Andrew's cross, or the letter X.

"A Spanish naval officer told you that I would come to you with this bank-note, and ask you if it was good!" said Perez, amazed, and terrified more than his self-control permitted the other to see. "Who was he?"

"I do not know who he was. He showed me the note, and in my presence made that cross on it. He told me that probably you would call with the note."

"But why did he tell you that?"

"I do not know," replied the money-broker, with a shrug of his shoulders. "I only know that he added, 'Tell Sancho Perez, if he calls with this note, that I told you he would. Then he will be aware that I am in earnest.' Those very words, for here they are as I wrote them down;" and the money-broker showed a paper on which he had written as above.

Perez read the words, but of course found no clue to the mystery.

"Well, it does not matter," he said, with perfectly affected carelessness. "You will give me the gold which the note calls for?"

"Certainly, with the usual percentage." And the money-broker counted out to Perez nearly fifteen hundred dollars in gold doubloons.

"I will keep the note, Samuels. Keep your gold. And you never saw this Spanish naval officer before?" asked Perez, as he secured the note in his pocket-book.

"Never, Señor."

"And when was he here?"

"This morning, Señor."

"This morning? Well, we will say no more about it," said Perez. "I have no doubt that I understand the affair. Good-day, Señor."

"But if I do understand head or tail of this mystery," added Perez to himself, as he hurried to obey the order of the unknown, "may I be garroted this day! And I feel the accursed garrote already around my throat! In earnest? I think the unknown is in earnest. A hundred doubloons to carry a single passenger, a mulattress, to New Orleans! I wish I could get a hundred passengers at the same price each. Twelve thousand reáls each."

And the next day *The Doubloon* sailed from Havana for New Orleans, with one passenger, a mulattress.

That mulattress was Mercita.

During the voyage from Havana to New Orleans she occupied alone the cabin of *The Doubloon*. Captain Perez, acting faithfully in obedience to orders contained in a second letter from the unknown, and which Mercita gave him before the schooner sailed from Havana, did not once approach the cabin, nor permit any one else to do so, except a boy who was the cook's assistant.

A few days after the arrival of *The Doubloon* at New Orleans, Captain Perez called on Madame Ruth Varlville.

"Madame," he said to the stately old lady—not so old then as when we introduced her and the Voodoo doctor, Adraste Scipian, to the reader—"I am told that you require a woman, not too young, and yet not old, to act as housekeeper in your mansion."

"I do, as I find it hard to fill the place left vacant by the death of a faithful servant," replied Madame Ruth.

"I have a woman who may suit you, Madame," said Perez, who then spoke very praisingly of the merits of Mercita; and on the same day he presented Mercita to Madame Ruth for examination.

"This man is your master?" asked Madame Ruth, alone with Mercita.

"He has the right to sell me, Madame," was the reply, in French, and in a sad, soft voice.

"Can you speak English?"

"Perfectly, Madame; and Spanish also."

"Captain Perez says that you can read and write, and keep accounts."

"Very well, Madame."

"Write something for me. Here are writing materials," said Madame Ruth. "Anything. Your age, your name, the place of your birth, the name of your master—a brief history of yourself, in fine, that shall fill that page."

"Madame will pardon me," replied Mercita, "for writing and saying nothing of my history, as it would pain me to mention it. But I will write something;" and with grace and ease Mercita wrote the Lord's Prayer, the first part in English, the second in French, the third in Spanish, and the fourth in German.

To this prayer, written with amazing rapidity, she signed but one word—her name of Mercita.

Madame Ruth was more than surprised. She was amazed. She said, after a long pause, during which she studied Mercita's features keenly:

"Uncover your head, Mercita."

Mercita took off her turban. A head of classic and beautiful shape, covered with short, crisp curls, was revealed.

Madame Ruth passed the palm of her hand over these curls. They were soft, but harsh and dry to the touch, and black as ink.

"There is some great mystery connected with your life, is there not, Mercita?"

"Great to me, Madame, but not to you," replied Mercita respectfully.

"Are you willing to be sold, Mercita?"

"To you, Madame."

"To no one else?"

"No, Madame."

"How long have you belonged to Captain Perez?"

"Not a month. I was sold to him in Havana by a lady—the only one that ever owned me. She taught me to read and write, and by her help and desire I learned all I know—that is, of languages and other accomplishments."

"Why did she sell you to Captain Perez?"

"That, Madame, she alone can tell."

"The secrets of others do not concern me," said Madame Ruth coldly. "I like your face. I like the sound of your voice. I think you will be a good and valuable servant. I will buy you."

"Ah, thanks, Madame. I will be faithful."

"Remain here," said Madame Ruth, who then went into another apartment, in which Captain Perez was awaiting her.

CHAPTER IV.

SOMETHING OF PEREZ.

When alone, Mercita covered her face with her hands, and stifled a sob of joy or of grief.

Suddenly she started, looked eagerly and anxiously about her, as if in keen search for something.

"The paper on which I wrote!" she muttered. "Ah, Madame had it in her hand. Perez may see it! What an oversight! No matter—he is too dull to detect— And then Madame may not show it to him."

Meanwhile Madame Ruth entered the room

in which Captain Perez was awaiting her coming.

"I trust Madame is pleased with the woman," said he, bowing.

"She is a remarkably accomplished woman to be a mulattress and a slave, Captain Perez."

"Oh, quite often the Spanish ladies of Cuba educate a favorite slave woman, especially when the latter is to be in daily, and perhaps hourly companionship," replied Perez.

"That is true. My late housekeeper was so educated by me. Unfortunately she died," said Madame Ruth, in a sad voice; "and for nearly a year I have tried in vain to find her equal. Your price for Mercita?"

"Two thousand five hundred dollars, Madame."

"It is a very large sum, Captain. Twenty thousand reáls!"

"Not for Mercita, Madame. She is very accomplished. She is worth a wilderness of common negroes."

Captain Perez demanded the amount because he had written instructions to that effect from the unknown; and he dared not disobey. Were he to disobey, even in the slightest particular, he would not dare to return to Cuba; and were he not to return to Cuba within a month after the sale of Mercita—so ran the tenor of the commands of the unknown—all his property on that island would be sequestrated as that of a fugitive criminal.

"You will accept no less than twenty-five hundred dollars, Captain Perez?" asked Madame Ruth, after long reflection.

"I can accept no less, Madame. In truth, I am not the owner of Mercita. I am but the agent of another."

"Very well. I will pay the price. Make out the bill of sale."

"There is a condition to be attached to any sale made of Mercita, Madame."

"A condition! Then I will have nothing more to do with the matter," said Madame Ruth. But she added in her mind instantly, "Yet let me not be too hasty. I conceived a strong, and indeed remarkable liking for this accomplished mulattress—more correctly we should term her a *greiff*—she is very dark. One of her parents must have been a mulatto, and the other a negro; she is very dark, almost black. And yet, how regular and classic her features! It is very strange! She seems very desirous that I shall buy her. And how sad her voice; how imploring her eyes! And I have promised her to purchase her. I was very hasty to do that before I had learned all the conditions. But I must not break my promise, even though given hastily and to a slave. State the condition, Captain Perez," she added aloud.

"The right to purchase her freedom, Madame, at any time, at the price for which she is sold, is to be reserved to Mercita; and this condition must be engrossed in the bill of sale."

"A very strange condition, Captain Perez. But perfectly just—as just as it is impossible that Mercita can ever accumulate so large a sum as twenty-five hundred dollars. But I accept the condition."

"Pardon me, Madame. I should have said that there were two conditions."

"State the other, sir."

"Madame, the purchaser of Mercita must stipulate never to sell her to another without giving her thirty days' notice of the intended sale."

"I never sell any of my servants, Captain Perez," replied Madame Ruth, with a cold haughtiness that abashed the slave dealer. "I have never sold one. If one were to become very bad and unruly, perhaps I might sell that one, or I might manumit him or her. Were one to ask me to sell him or her to this one or that one—desiring no longer to be my servant—I should either sell or set free that one. Not one of my servants has ever asked to be sold."

"Madame Varlville's kindness to her servants," said Captain Perez, bowing, and carefully avoiding the use of the word "slave," which he had noted was never uttered by Madame Ruth, "is spoken of even in Cuba; and doubtless is known to the present owner of Mercita."

"And why known to that person, Captain Perez? Or, rather, why do you make that remark?"

"Because, Madame, in my instructions—orders, in fact—from Mercita's owner, I am told to sell her, if possible, to Madame Ruth Varlville."

"Indeed! Who is this owner?"

"Madame, I do not know more than the name. I received a letter delivered to me by Mercita, from a lady—doubtless a lady—who signs herself Isadora Raymundo. In that letter are my instructions—orders, I should say. I am a slave dealer. I buy and sell slaves for myself, and for others. It is not my business to do more."

"Enough. I accept the second condition as well as the first. Are there any more?"

"None, Madame."

"Then draw up the bill of sale in accordance with those conditions."

"In duplicate, Madame."

"Why in duplicate?"

"I am to hold one subject to the order of Isadora Raymundo, Madame."

"Very well. Here are writing materials on this table."

"To perfect a sale—at least this one, Madame—we must sign in the presence of a notary-public."

"Very true. I will meet you at the office of this gentleman"—here Madame Ruth wrote the address of a notary on a card and gave it to Captain Perez—"within an hour. Mercita will remain here to accompany me. Will you be paid in gold, or silver, or notes?"

"I was about to ask Madame to give me her note, payable one day after date, to my order," said Captain Perez, exactly following in everything the instructions under which he had acted from the moment he received the second letter from his unknown master or mistress under the name of Isadora Raymundo.

"As you please, Captain Perez," replied Madame Ruth, who then left the room.

Captain Perez stepped to the table, on which were writing materials, made a few figures upon what he supposed was a blank half-sheet of paper, folded the paper without looking at it, put it into his pocket, and left the house.

At the hour appointed, the sale of Mercita was completed at the notary's office, and Captain Perez received from the notary the note of Madame Ruth and the duplicate of the bill of sale.

The parties then left the notary's office, Captain Perez taking his way alone toward the river, with the intention to embark on his schooner and drop down the river as soon as possible.

He had nearly arrived at the levee when some one tapped him on the shoulder. He halted, turned and beheld Mercita.

Soon after leaving the office of the notary Mercita had said to Madame Ruth, as they were about to get into the carriage of the latter:

"Ah, Madame, I should have spoken to Captain Perez of my trunk."

"I will send for it."

"But, Madame, fearing it might be stolen or broken open, I hid it where even the Captain cannot find it without going into a long search. And, if Madame is willing, I would like to send a few words to my last mistress."

"Certainly. We will drive down near to the shipping, and there you may get out, while I will await your return," replied Madame Ruth.

So that when Captain Perez turned he beheld Mercita near him, and the carriage of Madame Ruth not far distant; so distant, however, that Madame Ruth could not hear what was said by the two."

"Well," said Captain Perez, with a shrug of his broad shoulders, "are you about to come back on my hands like a bad penny? Come, I have no more to do with you, woman. You belong to that lady there in the carriage. Do you know? I wish I had never seen you. Diablos!" added the Captain, with a tremendous oath, which clearly evinced the great trouble of mind under which he had been laboring from the hour he received that anonymous note that had made him sail so suddenly from Havana. "The garrote has been around my neck in my dreams ever since I first saw the handwriting of your last mistress—"

"That is not my affair, Captain Perez," replied Mercita, in her sad and respectful tone. "But I wished to ask you not to forget to send my trunk, and to give you—"

But Captain Perez, with that brutish impatience which was a prominent trait in his character, broke in quickly upon what she was about to say.

"Devil fly away with your trunk and you and Isadora Raymundo—whoever Isadora Raymundo may be! See—for weeks I have had to dance attendance upon you—you, more a negress than even a greiff—as if you were a princess in disguise; had to leave my business on a sudden, at Havana; had to fit out *The Doubloon* in a jiffy, for a voyage to this place, which I hate; had to give my private cabin up to you—to you, a slave; had to respect your presence aboard my own craft as much as if the Queen of Spain were aboard, and not a negress to be sold in accordance with the whim of somebody I do not know. I tell you, woman, I hate you," he added, grinding his teeth, and between them a furious malediction. "Devils alive! that Sancho Perez should have lived to be chamberlain to a negress—to a slave! I tell you, woman, I had a mind, a thousand times at least, as we bowled across the Gulf, to pitch you overboard. I did, by San Iago."

Mercita shuddered. The glaring and flaming eyes of the slave dealer and pirate captain—for Sancho Perez was both—told the trembling woman that a dreadful and ever near peril had encompassed her while she was the solitary passenger of *The Doubloon*.

Perhaps for the first time she perceived how narrow had been her escape from that desperate rage which till now Sancho Perez had smothered.

"And I would have done that, or made you walk the plank, woman," continued Captain Perez, "but for hope of one thing. Do you want to know what that hope was?" he added, making a fierce grasp at her arm, and holding that arm in a ferocious clutch as he spoke.

"I thank God," replied Mercita, with sad firmness, as she nerved herself to gaze steadily into eyes which, at the moment, were rather the eyes of a demon than a man, "that I escaped death at sea; and I thank Him that He placed in your heart that hope of which you speak."

"Your priests, your parsons, your canting hypocrites," said Perez scornfully, "would say it was the devil that put that hope in my heart, though its presence there led me to spare your life, and act to the end the part Isadora Raymundo commanded me by letters to play, for it was a hope to be avenged on her."

"On my last mistress!"

"On this person who signs herself Isadora Raymundo!" replied Captain Perez fiercely.

"You intend to try to harm her when you return to Havana, Captain Perez?"

"That is my affair, for you know why I obeyed her?"

"I was a slave then, as I am now, Captain Perez."

"She—this Isadora Raymundo—did not tell you?"

"She told me nothing, except that her necessity compelled her to sell me, Captain Perez."

"Well, I will tell you, for as you say, you are a slave, and what I say to you I can deny hereafter. But it will do me good to say what I wish to say; I'll go mad if I don't," said Perez, with another grinding of his teeth. "She threatened to denounce me as a murderer, if I did not bring you to this place and sell you to some one of the several she named in that letter you gave me—to Madame Ruth Varlville, if possible, in preference to any. She had already sent me twelve thousand reáls—that is, a note of the Bank of Spain to that amount. There is some mystery in this affair that must yield me first, ten times as many reáls; and second, revenge—revenge on this Isadora Raymundo, who has made me dance attendance on you—on you, a negress. At first I was surprised, startled into obedience of the commands of an anonymous writer. Then I resolved to follow the matter to the end, and hoping to make much money out of it. You think very highly of your last mistress—this Isadora Raymundo—eh?"

"She was ever more kind to me than another can ever be, Captain Perez."

"Therefore I need not ask from you a hint of who and what and where she is. That I know, and so have asked you no questions. But I am going back to Cuba. I leave you here. You cannot warn her before I arrive there. Within three days after I set foot in Havana, this Isadora Raymundo—man, woman or devil—shall meet me face to face. Mark this, Mercita," he added, in a terrible voice, and scowling until his black brows were one, "if I have murdered once, I can murder again."

"You mean to murder Señora Raymundo?"

"Ha! So she is a Señora," exclaimed Perez eagerly. "That is one thing learned—and from you—ha! Señora, not Señorita, nor Señor—but Señora! A married woman, or a widow—eh? Thanks—you have given me a clue. I will follow it to the end. There—go; I will send your trunk to the mansion. So, that is her true name—eh? Señora Raymundo. Good!"

"This letter is from her to you, Captain," said Mercita," producing a note from her bosom, as Perez was about to turn away.

"Another letter from her!"

"Which she gave me with the command to give to you, Captain, in case I were sold."

"Give it to me! My curse upon her!" said Perez, snatching rather than taking the sealed letter from Mercita's hand.

He muttered another oath as he read these lines:

"Give to Mercita the duplicate bill of sale and the purchaser's note, speedily and privately, or my agent in New Orleans, who has eyes on your every action there, will denounce you to the chief officer of the city as Juan Ario, who four years ago stabbed a man on Cascalvo street, and escaped arrest. ISADORA RAYMUNDO."

Captain Perez grew suddenly pale, as he had in Havana when he saw this delicate and unknown writing for the first time.

He muttered fiercely and glanced around. The driver of Madame Varlville's carriage was handling his reins, as if about to drive the vehicle nearer, or to go away.

The city was then under the government of Spain, and Captain Perez saw two officers of the Spanish troops then garrisoning the city, sauntering toward him and Mercita.

"Perhaps one of those officers is an agent of this accursed Isadora Raymundo," thought Captain Perez, filled with terror. "My neck is as far in the garrote here as when I was in Havana. This Señora Raymundo seems to know all my weak points. I am a coward again. Diablos! This is the third time that her writing has made me tremble!" and here he wiped great beads of cold sweat from his forehead.

"Here, woman!" he gasped. "She told you something to say—didn't she?"

"To say when, Captain?"

"When you gave me this note. Diablos!"

"You were to give me something in return, Captain," replied Mercita respectfully.

"What? Come—you know. What? Money?"

"Not money, Señor, but the duplicate bill of sale and the purchaser's note."

"And if I refused, eh? If I refused? If I gave you nothing—ha!"

"I was to call out to two Spanish officers who should be not far off, and declare to the one with the green scarf that you were the man."

"What man?"

"She did not tell me."

Captain Perez had scarcely taken his eyes from the two officers. They had halted not far off, and stood with their backs toward him. He saw that one of the officers wore a green silk scarf across the left shoulder.

"That man," thought Perez, with a shudder, "is doubtless the secret agent of the unknown. I am in a net! I am in the toils! I must obey! So—while this Isadora Raymundo lives I must be her slave. A thousand curses on her! If ever I meet her—if ever I get within gunshot of her, she shall die, even though I be slain the instant after. To live in such terror of my life—to live only at the will of a woman—to be a blind slave to a woman's aims or whims—diablos! I would rather be dead. I obey—a little while longer—to be revenged hereafter."

These thoughts, hot and hissing as a puff of steam, shot through the brain of the amazed captain, as he hastily took the bill of sale and Madame Varlville's note from his pocket-book, and gave them to Mercita.

"Anything more?" he asked, with a snarl that showed all his teeth, and a scowl that almost hid his ferocious eyes.

"More what, Captain?" inquired Mercita, with an air of surprise, when she had glanced at the bill and the note, and placed both in her bosom.

"Any more of these infernal letters from Señora Isadora Raymundo?"

"No more, Captain—"

"Aye, and the three are enough—the fiend take the hand that penned them! So—there is an end to all that I have to do for you?"

"One thing more, Captain," replied Mercita, with that tone of deference she had used during all this rapid colloquy.

"One thing more!"

"You are to give me the three letters which you have received from my last mistress, Captain."

"And if I refuse?"

"There is an officer with a green scarf near us. I must call to him if you do not give me the three letters, Captain. I must say to him, 'This is the man.'"

"Oh—but you are no longer the slave of Señora Raymundo!"

"But still and forever her friend, Captain."

"You are, are you? Ho! very well! Good! I will not forget that. Well, here is her last letter—the one you have just given me. The others are lost."

"Lost, Captain?"

"Destroyed. I tore them up as soon as I had read them."

"If I were not a slave, and you a white man," replied Mercita firmly, though still respectfully, "I would say that you are mistaken, Captain."

"Ha! and why?" demanded Perez, bending a fierce look upon her eyes—eyes grown suddenly stern, resolute, even threatening.

"Because I saw you reading them this morning, Captain."

"Ha!—well, I destroyed them to-day."

"That is unfortunate. I must now call out to the officer in the green scarf;" and Mercita turned, as if about to do so.

"Bah! I have them! Here they are!" cried Perez, taking out his pocket-book in great haste. "Take them. I do not want them! But why did you not give me the last letter when we were in the notary's office?"

"I had no chance to give it to you privately, Captain."

"Well, why not yesterday, or before?"

"The bill of sale and the purchaser's note were not then in existence, Captain. But the carriage of my new mistress is approaching, and we must part."

"Part! I am glad of it," muttered the terrified and bewildered slave dealer, as Mercita left him. "I feared each instant she was about to set up a screech that should bring that officer in the green scarf, that secret agent of Señora Raymundo, upon me. She has the three letters—confound her! So I have lost what might have served me hereafter; for there must be some deep mystery in this affair. I wish I could have held those letters. Diablos! But I did not dare to refuse to give them up to the negress. Yet will I live for revenge. I will not continue in this blind and unresisting slavery. Gods! that Sancho Perez, who has bought and sold thousands of slaves, should have at last become a more helpless slave than any of all of them!"

He ground out a volley of unuttered maledictions, as a mitrailleuse loaded with damp powder might sputter at each vain discharge, and thrusting both hands deep into his pockets, hurried off toward *The Doubloon*.

Something crumpled and crackled in his grasp, as in his impotent wrath he clenched his pocketed fists.

"Ho! what is this?" said he, taking that hand which had grasped something, from the pocket.

His hand held something that he had picked up in the Varlville Mansion scarcely two hours before. The reader will remember that the captain paused after Madame Varlville had left the room, to make some calculation upon what he supposed was a blank half-sheet of paper, and that he folded that paper without looking at it as he did so, and put it into his pocket.

The figures he made referred only to some purchase of provisions which he had in view at the time, and had he known that the half-sheet was written upon on the other side, he would probably not have used it.

"What is this?" muttered the captain, as he drew the now crushed and crumpled paper from his pocket, and as the writing caught his eye. "English, French, Spanish and German—hum—the Lord's Prayer in four languages! What! ha! And here on the other side?—ah! these are my figures. Oh, yes—I made this calculation in Madame Varlville's house, and took the paper away with me. Let me think!"

The captain was not so dull-witted as Mercita had imagined, in her soliloquy as given above. He was able to detect. He halted, and after a wary glance around, stared long and keenly at that prayer written in four languages, and signed Mercita.

"Mercita wrote this," he mused. "I told Madame Varlville that the woman could read and write. I did not know whether she could or not. The letter of Isadora Raymundo bade me state that as a fact. So. Then Madame Varlville, to be assured in the matter, doubtless told Mercita to prove that she could read and write. Of course. And then, to prove that, Mercita wrote this. No doubt. Madame Varlville came into the room where I was—aha!—and now I remember she had a paper in her hand—yes—and she laid that paper on the table, with the writing beneath, on top of the other paper that was on the table, and here are the figures that I made on it in reference to what I wished to buy. Diablos! I smell a rat. Mercita wrote all at the dictation of Señora Raymundo!"

He glanced around as warily as ever. The carriage of Madame Varlville had disappeared. The two officers had also strolled out of sight. Captain Perez folded the paper very carefully—this time with the writing within—and placed it in a secret pocket on the inside of his vest.

Within an hour *The Doubloon*, carried by the swift current of the broad Mississippi, and sailing well with the wind at any point of the compass not dead ahead, was speeding on her way toward the Gulf.

There was neither telegraph nor steamer in that day, and as Captain Perez, standing on the deck of the fleet *Doubloon*, beheld the outline of the city grow faint and then vanish in the distance, he felt that he was safe from the power of any agent of Isadora Raymundo in the Crescent City.

"I will see to my affairs in Cuba," he mused. "I'll make all safe there first. After that, vengeance, freedom from this terrible slavery to an unknown, and a search for Angelique. I will return too, to you, Mercita—negress! By Heaven, you shall tell me who Isadora Raymundo is, if I learn not in Cuba—if torture, such as you have never dreamed of, can make you speak. Cuba first, to inquire and make secure my affairs there. But I must make my first port at Cardenas; leave the *Doubloon* there, and make my way to Havana by land, in disguise. This Señora Raymundo, having no further use for me, perhaps may cause my arrest on my return to Havana. I may have a traitor on board. Diablos! one of my crew may be her agent. I must first secure my own safety; in disguise arrange my business affairs in Havana; turn everything into gold or jewels, and then plan and work to rid myself of this peril which I cannot see, but which holds my life at the whim of a woman. Or perhaps the unknown is a man. Who knows? This Mercita must know. Well, we shall meet again, Mercita—and in less than two months."

But twelve years passed ere Captain Perez and Mercita met again; for within an hour after he anchored in the harbor of Cardenas—where it was his purpose to assume a cunning disguise and return to Havana—he was arrested upon the charge of having murdered his late mate and business partner, Rio, on the *Doubloon*, some weeks before, on the sea, somewhere between Havana and San Domingo.

To partially explain this arrest of the slave dealer, we must state that one of the two men who carried the trunk of Mercita to the Varlville Mansion, in obedience to the orders of Perez—who had not hesitated to open and examine the contents of the trunk, and found only such clothing as appertained to a woman of her caste and station—carried with him from New Orleans a purse of gold, a note to be delivered to the first Spanish official, civil or military, that he, the bearer, might meet on land or sea, and the promise that a similar reward should be his at some future time if he so delivered the sealed note.

The bearer, careless of results, was faithful in delivering the sealed note; and the result of the delivery was the arrest of Captain Perez.

"Upon what charge am I arrested?" asked Perez.

"I do not know," replied the Cardenas official, "that my duty requires me to tell you. But I will. The charge against you is, that on the night of April 10th—"

"Ah!" sighed Perez, growing pale.

"You stabbed Angelos Rio, your former mate and partner, and threw his body into the sea," continued the official.

"Bah! He fell overboard. All the crew know that."

"I hope such may be proved to be true, Captain. I must put you in irons. I must also seize your schooner. You will sail in her to Havana, as a prisoner."

"Diablos! But who makes so absurd a charge against me?" asked Perez, and adding to himself, "Of course my accuser must be that mysterious Isadora Raymundo."

"This is simply an order for your arrest, Captain. The charge, and not the maker of it, is mentioned. It is signed by the Captain-General of Cuba."

"By the Viceroy himself!" ejaculated Perez, with increased terror.

"You are well acquainted with his signature, of course, Captain Perez?"

"Perfectly, Señor."

"So am I. This is it," said the official emphatically.

"It is very plain," thought Perez, "that Señora Raymundo—whoever she is—intended that I should be arrested on my return to Cuba, whether I obeyed her or not; but how did she know that I was to make port at Cardenas before returning to Havana? I did not tell any of my crew. Diablos! I did not decide to come to Cardenas till I was in the Gulf on my return voyage. But perhaps an order for my arrest is at every port in the island! Fool that I was not to suspect that! But I am very sure that the murder cannot be proved on me. No one saw me, unless it was the old negro cook Pancho, and his evidence will not amount to much."

Before sailing for New Orleans, Perez had found, as will be related, the old negro who had been cook on the vessel at the time of the murder in question, and his first fears that Pancho had witnessed the death of Angelos Rio, and that Pancho was a woman in disguise, no longer existed. Yet the fact that some one had witnessed the deed stared Perez in the face.

"I shall see through the mystery when my trial comes off," thought Perez.

But on the arrival of the prisoner at Havana the Captain-General declared that the order for arrest was a forgery. His signature to the order only was genuine.

It was then perfectly clear that some one must have secretly obtained the genuine signature of the Captain General. Captain Perez, who had held his lips sealed ever since being put in irons, was in his cell in prison when a turnkey told him that the order for his arrest was a forgery.

"Ho! a forgery!" exclaimed Perez, delighted, and dancing around his cell. "A forgery! Ha, ha! a forgery! See how an innocent man has been abused! Ho! diablos! now wait until I get my hands on that Mercita!" he added, to himself, and grinding his teeth. "If she does not tell me who Isadora Raymundo is, I will flay her alive and bathe her in brine—as Rio, Gomaza and I did the Portuguese sea-captain off Isle of Pines, when he refused to tell where he had hidden his moidores. Ho! he told then, at the first dash of the brine over his bleeding back! Here, jailer, since the order for my arrest is a forgery, strike off these irons and let me out."

"I can't do that, you know, until an order for your release comes, you know, Captain."

"None has come?"

"Not yet, Captain."

"But of course one will soon be here, eh?"

"You know as much about that as I do, Captain. I am not the Captain-General. I am only a turnkey."

"Certainly. How should you know anything—except how to turn keys? Ha! ha!" said Perez facetiously. "But of course an order for my release will soon be here. You are a very clever sort of a fellow, Riaz," he added patronizingly, "and next Sunday—"

"That's to-morrow, Captain."

"So it is—if you say so—and you shall dine with me to-morrow, Riaz—eh?"

"Here, Captain?"

"Here! Diablos!—no. In my snug parlor at my slave mart," roared Perez, in high glee. "We will have a famous feast. The order that's coming for my release won't be a forgery, eh? Ha, ha, ho!" And Sancho Perez executed a lively dance of joy, quite a feat for a man in irons, and the jingling and clanking of his irons made a musical accompaniment.

Riaz, the turnkey, being of a sympathetic nature, joined in the dance, shaking his huge bunch of great keys at every leap.

"I say!" said Perez, after getting short of wind.

"Well, Captain?"

"Who forged that order?"

"Señora Isadora Raymundo."

"Oh!" exclaimed the captain, staring at the turnkey. "Who?"

"Señora Isadora Raymundo. There can be no doubt of it, Captain."

"But who is Señora Isadora Raymundo?"

"Nobody knows."

"Nobody knows!"

"Not a soul. Not even the Captain-General."

"This Isadora Raymundo must be the devil!" muttered the captain.

"Next door to it, Captain," said the turnkey, who overheard the other's remark. "She is a woman. Ho, ho!"

But Captain Perez did not join in the laugh. All laugh had gone from him.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

MAXIMS.—We lessen our wants by lessening our desires.—Mildness governs better than anger.—Youth is the season for improvement. Yielding tempers pacify resentments.—Words may pass, but blows fall heavy.—The shortest answer is doing the thing.—Wit once bought is worth twice taught.

—There sometimes wants only a stroke of fortune to discover numberless latent good or bad qualities, which would otherwise have been eternally concealed; as words written with a certain liquor appear only when applied to the fire.

WIT AND HUMOR.

A COUNTRY editor who was pestered with "contributions in verse" from a persistent rhymester till his patience gave out, wrote to his correspondent thus: "If you don't stop sending me your sloppy poetry, I'll print a piece of it some day, with your name appended in full, *and send a copy to your gal's father!*" That poetical fountain was spontaneously dried up.

AN old man, ninety-five years of age, having moved from Vermont to Minnesota, was asked his reason for doing so. "Well," said he earnestly, "I've lived in Vermont, now, nigh on to a hundred years, and I rather think the climate there is bad for my constitution, and so I thought I'd come out here, where I'd stand a chance to live to a respectable old-age."

"SEE here," said a doorkeeper of the United States Senate Chamber to a crazy man who had got into the Ladies Gallery; "don't you know that this is no place for you?" "That's so," gravely replied the lunatic; and then pointing to the Senators below, he added, "My place is down there among those fellows!"

AN old bachelor getting vexed at the freedom with which his landlady's daughter used his hair oil, filled his bottle with liquid glue the evening she was invited to a ball, and then went out for an hour. The young lady staid at home that evening, and for several days afterward.

HAPPY BRIDEGROOM—"More money, Madam! more money! Have you forgotten that *my* money has bought everything you have—even the dress you stand in?" *Fair Bride*—"No, sir; nor have I forgotten that your money also bought what stands in the dress."

"LET that pudding alone, there! That's the dessert!" exclaimed a waiter, to a countryman who was discounting the tapioca at an early stage of the dinner. "I don't care if it is a desert," testily said the countryman; "I'd eat it if it was a wilderness!"

A LITTLE four-year-old beset his mother to talk to him and say something funny. "How can I?" she asked; "don't you see how busy I am baking these pies?" "Well, you might say, 'Charley, won't you have a pie?' That would be funny for *you!*"

"HOW far is it to Cub Creek?" asked a traveller of a woman at a toll-gate. "Only shoost a little vays." "Is it four, six, eight, or ten miles?" impatiently asked the fretful traveller. "Yas, I dinks it is," serenely replied the unmoved gate-keeper.

A MAN who put his money in a "Universal Corpse Preserver," and lost it, said the business failed solely because it was impossible to get any recommendations of the U. C. P. from those who had successfully used it.

"TAKE your departure to the abode of the reverberating echoes of Heaven's artillery!" angrily exclaimed a Western Congressman to an opponent, "or," he mildly added, "in plain English, go to thunder!"

"AH, ladies," said an old *bon vivant*, as he opened a bottle of wine, "what is more delightful than the popping of a champagne cork?" "The popping of the question!" unanimously cried the ladies.

A KENTUCKY editor says a neighbor of his is so lazy that when he works in the garden he moves about so slowly that the shade of his broad-brimmed hat kills the plants.

WHEN you hear a man say, "Life is but a dream," tread on his corns and wake him up. Life is as real a thing as there is anywhere.

THE last definition of a modern fashionable marriage—An altar on which man lays his pocket-book, and woman her love-letters.

A RESTAURANT sign in Nassau street, in this city, informs the passer-by that "Rise and Tap-peroaky Pudin" can be had within.

A NATURALIST has taken the ground that a lobster is a posthumous work, inasmuch as it is never red till after death.

"I AM dyeing for love," said a melancholy young man, as he put the coal-black fluid on his mustache.

A REPORTER, in describing a wreck at sea, says that "no less than thirteen unfortunates *bit the dust.*"

IT is the experience of many lyceums that discussion of a knotty question results in a tie vote.

CURRENT ITEMS.

AN UNUSUAL CASE OF RESTITUTION.—Two years ago a citizen of Massachusetts drew some money from a bank, and was overpaid four hundred dollars. As banks "never rectify mistakes," he kept the money. Recently he has become a Christian, and the four hundred dollars troubling his conscience, he has just paid it back, giving a mortgage on his house to do so.

A GENTLEMAN and his wife living in New Haven were awakened a few nights since by some one whistling in an adjoining room, and were naturally very much startled. Upon investigation they found that their son, a lad of ten or eleven years, was sound asleep and whistling! They did not awaken him, and he went on through the tune correctly.

THE country around Lexington, Kentucky, is reported to be literally swarming with locusts. The air is filled with the sound of their doleful cry, and the farmers are awakening to the necessity of doing something to protect their orchards from the pest. Trees injured by them at their last visit, seventeen years ago, are only just recovering.

A FARMER near Westport, Mass., recently shot a horse valued at a thousand dollars, belonging to a gentleman in Fall River. The offence of the horse was that he left his pasture and passed over a low fence into the grounds of the farmer who shot him. The act has excited the indignation of the entire community.

A clerk in a grocery store in Manchester, N. H., last week undertook to ascertain the cause of the head of a hogshead of molasses bulging out by striking it with a mallet, when a loud report ensued, and he was thrown violently across the floor, and enveloped from head to foot in a flood of molasses.

THE axle of a sleeping car on the Nashville and Northwestern Railroad broke on Sunday morning last, near Pegram Station. The car overturned and was violently thrashed along the track, till a lady passenger in it was killed. Four other inmates of the car escaped without serious injury.

Several recent murder trials in Illinois having resulted in "weak and insufficient verdicts," as the papers call them, by which is meant the acquittal of the accused, "a demand is made by the sovereign people for summary executions, that murder's bloody hand may be stayed."

AT Lakeville, last Saturday, a man, in the employ of a gentleman in that place, went into the stall of a horse to feed him, when the animal knocked him down and trampled upon and mutilated him in such a shocking manner that there is little expectation of his recovery.

THE Rev. James A. McEvoy, of Fitchburg, Mass., said to have been the oldest clergyman in the world, died a few days ago, at the great age of one hundred and eleven years. He was born in the year 1761, which was eight years before Wellington and Napoleon were born.

WILLIAM CULLEN BRYANT is expected soon to give twelve thousand dollars to the town of Cummington, to be expended in establishing a public library. The building is to be of stone, and is to be located as near the centre of the town as possible.

A MAN named John Cook, his wife, and three children, were massacred by Indians, near Oak Lake, Minn., a few weeks ago. Cook went from New Hampshire to Minnesota, for the purpose, as he said, of "bettering himself."

A CORRESPONDENT writes from Buenos Ayres that everything is done there on horseback. Even the beggars ride through the streets, knock at the doors without dismounting, and wait, still mounted, to receive charity.

A BOSTON steamboat captain became so depressed by business troubles a few days ago, that he went to the old homestead where he was born, and drowned himself in his father's well.

THE boiler of a steamer on the Ohio river exploded on Saturday evening of last week, tearing the boat in pieces and seriously wounding and scalding nearly everybody on board.

A SMALL lake has been discovered among the Cascade Mountains, in Oregon, which is surrounded by a perpendicular wall two thousand feet high.

A LAWSUIT was recently decided in this city which was begun more than twenty years ago, and the original parties to which are all dead.

A CONVICT in the Michigan State-prison has, by the death of his father, fallen heir to a fortune of $980,000 and a valuable farm.

IT is reported that nearly all the bees in Eastern Maine were killed by the excessive cold of last winter.

SILENT FULL PARADISE—THE SEALING KISS.

BY WILLIAM ROSS WALLACE.

"Whisper it, whisper it softly!" My darling,
What mean you? I'm sure that I spoke not so loud,
And there's not a soul here to listen my wooing,
Any more than there is in yon moon-silvered cloud.

"Yet whisper it, whisper it softly, O softly,
As I am now trying to whisper to thee;
Yes, soft as the song of a breeze still an infant,
For some one *might* near us a listening be.

"And, oh, what you tell me of your love in plighting,
Is so dear and so sacred in its every tone,
That I want the good God who will hallow our bridal,
And me, the full blessed one, to hear you alone."

Well, well, be it so, my own wife in next autumn;
Your fear need not frighten from mutual bliss,
For here every whisper is turned, my vowed darling,
Into *silent* full Paradise—this sealing kiss.

MARK HEBER'S LUCK;

OR,

Life on the Plains.

By LEON LEWIS,

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CHAPTER XXXIX.

CRASH UPON CRASH.

As Governor Kent and Miss Isabel Holley were brought nearer to the terrible Devil Chief, who stood in the red firelight, his face half in shadow, his gigantic figure towering far above those of the Indian warriors around him, Miss Holley uttered a shriek of despair, and wailed in a hoarse and broken voice:

"Oh, that horrid Blue Jack! I can't see him! I can't! Kill me here, Mr. Burk—oh, no, no! Let me go! Please let me go! I never harmed anybody. My father will pay you if you'll let me go. He is the richest man in the West. Oh, I can't see Blue Jack! I'll die at sight of his awful face! I know I shall!"

She struggled and fought desperately, and Burk was obliged to raise her in his arms and carry her. One of the savages followed, with a close grip upon the arm of Governor Kent. Miss Holley kicked and screamed and bit her captor, and raved in a sort of hysterics, and in this condition, with her long hair flowing in a tangled mass over her face, with her silk garments torn, she was deposited upon the ground before the Devil Chief.

Blue Jack stood in all the glow of the light, his face turned to the fire. The faces of the two captives before him were in shadow. He contemplated the crouching figure of Miss Holley in scorn, and cried out fiercely:

"What ails the infernal woman? Hasn't she sense enough to know that she's stirring up the Indians—"

Miss Holley uttered a fearful shriek and sprang to her feet, glaring at Blue Jack wildly.

"The—the voice—" she gasped.

"I never saw a woman act like such a fool!" protested Blue Jack. "So, this is your prize, Burk? I wish you joy of her. I—"

Miss Holley leaped toward the outlaw, with another ringing scream, and threw up her arms as in an utter abandonment of terror and horror.

"Oh, is it—" she gasped—"the—the voice! Oh, my father! My father!"

Burk interposed at this crisis.

"Cap'n," he said, "the girl's gone crazy. She takes you for her father, you see. Her father's a rich land speculator out at Denver. Her name's Isabel Holley—"

Blue Jack uttered a yell that rang through the camp.

With a single bound he cleared the distance that still intervened between him and the young lady. He seized her and turned her face to the light. And then his agitation and excitement found vent in a hollow groan. He actually staggered, and clutched the girl tightly as if for support.

Miss Holley looked up into his hideously discolored face and shrank from him. Then seeing his bold black eyes fixed upon her in a look of incredulous recognition, she clung to him with both hands, and sobbed out, in utter forgetfulness of his address to her, and of the fact that he was Blue Jack himself:

"Oh, papa, it is you! Are you a prisoner too? How have they hurt your face? Where is your beard? How strangely you look! I—I hardly know you."

The outlaw trembled like a leaf. A cold sweat poured from his face.

Miss Holley loosened her clasp upon his arm, and half retreated, bewildered and frightened, and partly convinced that she was mistaken in his identity. The scar on his face was new to her. She had not seen her father for many years when his face had been uncovered by a full beard. But the eyes, small and sinister, bright with a metallic lustre, were unmistakably the eyes of her father, and she sprang back to him, crying:

"Father, speak to me. Don't you know your own Isabel? Save me from that awful Blue Jack!—save me from the savages! How did you come here? Have they dared to make you their prisoner too? Oh, save me! save me!"

"Miss," cried Burk, "he an't your father. He's Blue Jack! He's the Devil Chief!"

Miss Holley again loosened her clasp upon the outlaw's arm, and retreated several steps, her features working.

And now for the first time she noticed the half-savage garb of Blue Jack, the fact that he was free and unfettered, his air of command, the respectful distance from him maintained by the wondering savages, and she knew that he was no prisoner among them.

"Are—are you Blue Jack?" she asked hoarsely.

The outlaw dared not answer in the negative. The fact of his identity with the Devil Chief of the Sioux and the great desperado who had a score of times cheated Judge Lynch, and whose crimes were known throughout the West, was only too apparent. His head drooped a little.

The girl received his silence as an affirmative answer.

"And you are my father!" she ejaculated, in a wild and bitter scorn. "You are the rich land owner—the great speculator—the proprietor of the biggest ranche in Colorado! You are going to take me east, to be a queen in society—you! *you!* Oh, Heaven! I can't believe it! I won't believe it! It's only some strange resemblance. My father is not Blue Jack the outlaw! It is impossible."

"Cap'n," said Burk, "the savages are muttering among themselves. The girl is crazy. Better let them put her out of her misery."

Miss Holley uttered a piercing, agonized wail.

"Isabel!" cried Blue Jack hollowly, raising his head and sending a startled glance in the direction of the scowling Indians. "For Heaven's sake, be calm. I—I can explain everything. Don't shriek so. You are only imperilling yourself, Isabel—"

But Miss Holley, finding her worst fears confirmed, went into a series of spasmodic screams, shrinking from her strangely discovered father in loathing and anger.

Blue Jack wiped his forehead, and turned toward Burk in sullen despair. His daughter was his idol. He would not have had her know him in his real character for all the wealth for which he had schemed and planned. He felt now the pangs of that retribution which must come sooner or later to every guilty soul.

"Burk," he said, in a hoarse, strained voice, which Miss Holley, catching her breath, heard distinctly, "it's all true. The girl's my daughter. Why didn't you let her go on with the train to Denver? Curse the luck! I wouldn't have had her know the truth for all the money there is in the universe!"

"And your real name's Edmund Holley, Cap'n?" asked Burk, in astonishment. "By George! Are you the rich nob she's been threatening us with ever since we started? Well, I never! You've got all your family around you now, eh, Cap'n? Your two darters, I mean, Isabel and Gabrielle."

Governor Kent, whom Blue Jack had not yet noticed beyond a mere casual glance, had been very attentive to the strange scene of which he had been a witness. He had recognized in Blue Jack the second husband of his son's widow—the Edmund Holley whom he was journeying to Denver to visit. He was appalled by his discovery of the identity of Blue Jack with Edmund Holley. And at the mention of "Gabrielle" he started violently.

"Isabel—" said Blue Jack tremulously.

The young lady put her hands to her ears, and increased the violence of her screams.

"I cannot talk with her until she is calmer," said the outlaw desperately. "Take her away, Burk, back into the edge of the forest. And warn her to keep quiet. I'll come to her presently. I will talk to her when there are not so many savage ears to listen."

"Shall I bind her again, Cap'n? She'll run away if I don't, or commit suicide."

"Yes, you can bind her then, Burk, but loosely, remember. There's no help for it. She mustn't be hurt. Be very gentle with her. Soothe her, Burk. Tell her I'm not Blue Jack—that I'm a prisoner—anything. I'll start with her in the morning for Omaha. How she came to leave Omaha surpasses my comprehension. I'll have a talk with her soon. Remember, Burk, to treat her as an honored lady—a guest rather than a captive. The bonds are only to keep her from running away or killing herself."

Burk nodded his comprehension, and approached Miss Holley. She resisted him, striking at him blindly. He picked her up, and forcibly restraining her arms, carried her back to the vicinity of the captive Gay. Here he passed a leathern strap about her waist, passing it also around the tree. Her hands and feet were left unconfined.

Blue Jack, oblivious of the second prisoner, paced to and fro in the firelight, in an uncontrollable agitation.

"It's hard on her," he muttered. "My poor girl! She's as proud as Lucifer. Will she ever be reconciled to me? She must be. I'll tell her that I am innocent of Blue Jack's crimes—that they have been grossly exaggerated. I'll start for the far East—for New York—with her at once. I'll introduce her to Governor Kent as the child of my first marriage. I will claim the property of my wife Gabrielle— Ah, there's this girl to dispose of before I can go—this girl Gay!"

He strode back and forth, moody and morose, his soul black with hideous schemes of murder.

Burk returned to him almost immediately.

"Cap'n," he said, "I forgot. There's another prisoner here, just as important as the girl. He's there, in the hands of the Big Buffalo."

Blue Jack waved his hand impatiently.

"Take him back," he said. "I am in no mood to speak to him. Yet, if he is of so much importance, I'll see him for a single instant. Bring him closer!"

Governor Kent shook off the grasp of the savage who held him in the shadowy background, and came forward, his noble face set and stern in every feature, his keen accusing eyes full of sorrowing surprise.

"It is I, Edmund Holley!" he exclaimed.

Blue Jack glared at him wildly, as if he looked upon a ghost.

"I see you recognize me," said the Governor bitterly. "I should scarcely have known you save for your voice, your peculiar figure, and your eyes. That hideous scar on your cheek is new to me. When you came east you wore a beard—a false one, I suppose. And you are Blue Jack, the terror of the plains! You are the Devil Chief of the Sioux Indians! You are the husband of an Indian wife! How strangely I have been deceived in you!"

Blue Jack winced. He had not yet recovered from the shock occasioned by his daughter's appearance, and he seemed still unnerved. He could not even find voice to reply to his prisoner.

"I was on my way to Denver to visit you," said Governor Kent. "I have been spared, it seems, a portion of my journey. Is it your intention," he asked, with bitterest sarcasm, "to release me on payment of a ransom, or shall you order me to be scalped by your followers? I have heard of two instances in which the Devil Chief scalped white men with his own hands!"

Blue Jack put his hand to his forehead in a dazed manner.

"It's useless for me to deny the truth, I suppose," he said sullenly. "You have recognized me, Governor Kent, and you have witnessed my daughter's recognition of me. Well, what of it? I am Blue Jack. I am the Devil Chief," and his tone grew defiant. "And now what are you going to do about it?"

"I am unable to do anything about it at present."

"What can you do in the future? Suppose I release you. You cannot keep me out of Gabrielle's property. She made a will, giving me the property under certain conditions, and I shall have it. You cannot keep it from me."

"Is Gabrielle dead?" asked the Governor.

"Yes; I can prove it. After a little research, I can procure every proof necessary to give me the victory in a suit at law."

"The property was left by my son to his young widow absolutely, and without reserve, but my son expected it to revert to his two children, or to the survivor of them. You married the young widow a year after her husband's death. You procured her signature to a will, giving you her fortune should her children die young and unmarried. Within three months after she had signed that will, her young son, my grandson and the sole inheritor of my name, died—apparently by an accident. You rode him down in the home grounds of your wife's country place, and your horse's hoofs trampled in his little skull. And so one life between you and the fortune you coveted was removed."

"I swear it was an accident. I did not mean to kill him."

"So you said at the time," said Governor Kent sternly. "And so I believed until this hour. Your young wife, it seems, read your wicked soul in all its capacity for crime better than any other. She went insane and fled with her remaining child, with the hope of preserving its life and hiding with it somewhere from you! She believed that it would die by your hands if she did not flee with it. I have no wish to argue your guilt or innocence with you, Edmund Holley. I can only say that my eyes have been opened within this hour to your true character. I believe that my poor young daughter-in-law, insane and wandering, in delicate health, of a sensitive, nervous temperament and a high-strung soul, died years ago. But the child—little Gabrielle—where is she?"

He fixed upon the outlaw a glance that pierced even to his soul.

Burk, startled and wondering, ejaculated:

"If this don't beat all! The girl turns out to be Blue Jack's darter. And this fiery old Gov'nor is a sort of father-in-law. And little Gay then is only the Cap'n's step-darter, 'stead of his real one. I reckon, Gov'nor, that little Gay Heber yonder is your granddarter?" and Burk pointed to the small figure of the distant prisoner.

If a glance could have slain, Burk would have fallen dead under that hurled at him from the angry, menacing eyes of his leader.

"Shut up! curse you!" muttered the Devil Chief.

Burk was silent, but the mischief was done. The Governor had glanced toward the quiet little figure of Gay Heber, scarcely distinguishable in the gloom of the trees that sheltered her, and his heart leaped within him.

"Is that my granddaughter yonder?" he demanded, in agitation.

Blue Jack hesitated, but only for a moment. He was in a reckless mood, and said hastily:

"After what has passed, Governor Kent, you will not be permitted to return to civilization with some story about me to rehearse to your friends or to publish in the papers. Matters have been forced to a crisis. I had no cause to war against you. If you had remained at the East you might have lived out the natural term of your existence. In coming out here, you take your life in your hands, and you must not be surprised if you lose it."

"You have not answered my question, Edmund Holley," said Governor Kent. "Is the girl yonder my granddaughter?"

"I have reason to believe that she is," declared Blue Jack recklessly. "But the relationship will benefit neither of you. She is the promised bride of the Indian Lenno, and you— We won't talk of your fate, Governor. Burk, take him away. Bind him hand and foot and lash him to a tree. I must think this matter over."

The Governor made no effort to prolong the interview, but walked away between Burk and the savage.

When he had been again securely bound, Burk returned to his master.

"What's to be done, Cap'n?" he asked sympathetically. "This here's a queer situation. The Gov'nor means to beat you out of your big fortune, if he gets free."

"He won't get free," returned Blue Jack darkly. "I shall let the Indians put him to death. A hint to Inoway will suffice. He shall never go back to tell his story of me, or to take steps to keep me out of my wife's fortune."

"But the girl 'll 'herit it," said Burk. "And she may escape even from Lenno's wigwam. You can't put her to death. All the savages will be ag'in that. They'll stand up for Lenno's rights till the last gasp. Sure as you give an order to have her killed, they'll mutiny."

Blue Jack knew that this was true.

"Lenno's watching you continual," said Burk. "He's left the girl to keep an eye on your movements. He knows you hate the girl. He'll stick to his intention of marrying her, and when you are in New York, in the midst of high life and prosperity, that infernal young Heber'll be creeping back here again and rescue her. Then, Cap'n, down goes your house. Heber's got an idee that you're after a fortune that belongs to the girl. He'll scent out the whole thing, and get the girl her rights."

"He'll find her grave if he comes!" said Blue Jack fiercely, his guilty fears up in arms. "She'll never live to marry Lenno. She won't live an hour. Call Inoway to me. Be secret. I don't want Lenno to see you call him."

Burk went away, and soon after the half-breed Inoway sauntered leisurely near to his chief. As if by a sudden impulse, he turned from his course and approached Blue Jack, with some trivial question.

"Come nearer," said the outlaw, whispering. "Inoway, the pale-faced girl is in my way. She must be removed. I will call a council of all the braves, and you must be absent. I will contrive that you are not missed. Lenno shall be called upon to speak. And while the prisoners are left unguarded, you must go to the smaller of the two girls yonder and offer to release her. You must pretend to guide her to a place of safety. Tell her that the Indians are in council, and have resolved to burn her at the stake. She'll go quietly enough, I'll warrant. Can you do this?"

"Yes, Cap'n, I can and will," answered Inoway. "The eyes of Lenno are keen and watchful, but Inoway loves his chief, and will brave much for him. Is it your will that the girl shall go free?"

"No. Take her away a little distance, out of earshot. And then, as soon as you can, *bring me her scalp!* You can say to Lenno, and the rest, that you found her escaping. I will justify and protect you, but no one must suspect my connivance with you."

"Which girl is it, Cap'n?"

"The smaller one, to the left. She has short hair. The other young lady is my daughter, and must not so much as hear Gay Heber's screams. My daughter must be tenderly and carefully treated. I shall start with her in the morning for the East. Remember, the smaller girl with the short hair, to the left of the male prisoner."

"I understand, Cap'n. I will bring you her scalp in half an hour," answered Inoway. "It is settled!"

The half-breed stalked away, apparently unconcerned.

Blue Jack immediately called a council of the braves to determine the fate, as he said to them, of Governor Kent. The warriors gathered about the central fire, squatting on the ground, and the Devil Chief called upon Lenno for his opinion in the matter.

Inoway flitted into the shadowy background. He was ready for his nefarious task, but watched his chance to steal around into the edge of the forest.

CHAPTER XL.

CONCLUSION.

And where, during all these hours of excitement and terror, was young Mark Heber?

We left him hidden securely in the hollow trunk of an old oak-tree in the depths of the forest. He remained there, behind a screen of vines whose leaves fluttered in every breeze, until long after the pursuit for him had been given over. Consumed with anxieties for the fate of Gay, every moment of inaction was torture; and yet, with stern self-repression, he compelled himself to remain watchful, motionless, hidden, until the shadows of the dying day began to thicken around him.

Then he crept out from his concealment into the forest.

His whole soul was occupied with thoughts of Gay. If she were dead, he meant to avenge her. If she still lived, he would rescue her, or die with her.

The sounds from the Indian bivouac penetrated to his ears, and guided him. He crept through the shadows from tree to tree, moving in the direction whence the sound came, his young face set and stern, his blue eyes burning with the steady fire of implacable resolve.

He had no difficulty in nearing the camp unseen. He approached within sight of it at the moment when the newly arrived party of Indians under Red Adder and Burk joined the party, and the two prisoners, Governor Kent and Isabel Holley, were secured to trees near Gay.

His glance passing beyond them, found Gay. She was half-reclining against the trunk of the tree to which she was lashed, very quiet, but he could trace in the gloom that fell upon her like a vail, her calm, pale features, and he knew that she still lived.

What a burst of thanksgiving went up from his young soul!

He dared not speak to her, nor arouse her. The question was now of her rescue. He could not fight some fifty savages; his only hope was to get off with her unseen.

Could that be done? The effort seemed worse than useless, yet he resolved to make it.

"The first thing to be had is a horse," he thought. "There is no escape without one. I must perfect all my arrangements before I communicate with Gay."

The task before him required the utmost caution and shrewdness. He had both in good degree, sharpened into preternatural activity, and he had also a rare degree of exergy, promptness and daring qualities, such as were needed now above all others.

A few minutes' investigation showed Mark that the horses of Blue Jack and his party, now thoroughly rested, were tethered at the northern side of the forest only a few rods from the camp, but hidden from it by a few intervening trees. There were two sentinels in charge of them—or there had been, we should say, for one had gone to the camp, deserting his post, and the other lay on the ground asleep! He had ridden all night and all day, and was exhausted.

Mark comprehended the situation at a glance.

The gloom was, of course, not so dense on the prairie as in the forest. Mark, standing in the shadow of the trees, could see each horse distinctly, and observe something of their respective merits.

The horse of Mark, which Gay had ridden, had not been unsaddled. It stood near the edge of the wood, cropping the grass lazily.

"I can take four as well as one," thought Mark. "They will not be missed. There are two prisoners near Gay. I cannot bear to leave them. I must try to rescue them also."

He stole out on the prairie and secured one of the horses, leading him into the wood. In his search for a secure hiding-place for him for some minutes, Mark came upon a well-worn Indian trail, a regularly defined path through the forest. He tied the horse to a tree in this path, and went back for another.

One after another, working slowly and with extremest caution, he secured in all four horses, which he hitched to trees in the Indian path. He then crept back, flitting from tree to tree and bush to bush, toward the trees outlying the eastern side of the Indian camp.

On arriving within sight of Gay, he found that the two other prisoners, Governor Kent and Isabel Holley, were in their places where he had left them, and that the Devil Chief was summoning his warriors to council.

This was the opportunity Blue Jack had made for Inoway to destroy the life of Gay Heber. And this opportunity Mark was stealing to save the young life so precious to him.

As the warriors squatted around their council fire, and the murderous half-breed Inoway hovered in the distant shadows, and even the half-breed lad Lem. had been called away by the outlaw chief to give Inoway full opportunity for his nefarious work, Mark Heber opened his hunting-knife, and stole up behind Gay upon his hands and knees.

She heard the faint fluttering in the grass behind her, but gave no heed to it.

"Hush, Gay!" whispered Mark Heber's voice in her ear.

Gay started slightly, and was then as silent as death.

"I am going to get off with you, or die with you!" went on Mark's voice, in a faint whisper, scarcely to be heard above the fluttering of the leaves above and around her. "The darkness is thick here. When I loose you, creep on your hands and knees. Now, dear."

He cut the thong that bound her to the tree. His keen blade severed the strap that held her arms behind her. He handed her the knife, and one swift stroke from Gay's own hands loosened her feet. She passed back the knife to him through the grass, her big brown eyes fixed on the warriors.

Blue Jack had laid his plan well. A smaller fire had been suddenly kindled by Burk between the edge of the wood and the council of warriors, cutting off all view of the latter in the direction of the prisoners. Lenno was speaking to his fellow-braves, urging the death of Governor Kent and a return of the warriors to their village.

Gay Heber, obeying Mark's injunction, crept away into the shadows upon her hands and knees.

Governor Kent heard the faint rustling, and lifted his head. He saw Gay's procedure, and comprehended that she was being rescued, but not a start nor a contraction of a muscle on his part betrayed his knowledge.

Isabel Holley was still weeping and moaning, and heard nothing save her own outcries.

At the distance of a few feet from the spot where she had been confined, Gay arose to her feet. Mark led her swiftly to the waiting horses, and mounted her upon one which he deemed the fleetest.

"Oh, Mark!" said the young girl breathlessly, "must we leave that poor young lady and that gray-haired man to perish, in the fury of the savages at my escape?"

"Stay here till I come," answered Mark.

He flitted back, uncertain if his humanity might not prove his ruin and that of Gay.

He crept up behind Governor Kent upon his hands and knees, and whispered softly:

"Caution, sir! Not a word! Do as I tell you, and I'll free you! The least noise from you will seal the fate of us all."

The Governor was as motionless as before, but his soft whisper stole back to Mark:

"I will obey you!"

"Then, when I free you, follow me on your hands and knees. Be still as death. The very leaves have ears."

He cut the Governor's bonds behind him, and pushed forward his knife. The old statesman cut his ankle bonds, and returned the weapon.

Mark crawled away as before. The Governor, with a keen backward glance, followed suit, falling upon his hands and knees. Mark guided him to the spot where the horses waited, and mounted him also.

"I must go back to free the young lady," said the young man. "If you hear any outcry, sir, follow the trail with Gay. I will follow with the young lady—"

"Stay!" said Governor Kent, detaining Mark. "The young lady is Blue Jack's own daughter, captured by Burk, who did not suspect her parentage. I pledge you my word that she is safe in her father's hands. He has only caused her to be bound in order to prevent her running off or committing suicide, in her chagrin at her discovery of his real character."

The Governor's manner assured Mark of his truthfulness. He believed him. There was no time to lose. Even now he might have fatally delayed. Without a word he vaulted upon the back of his horse, and led the party along the Indian trail into the depths of the forest. When they had gotten beyond hearing of the Indian camp, he quickened the horses' walk to a jog, and a little later to a gallop.

And all this while Lenno was holding forth to the assembled warriors in a flood of fine Indian oratory, and Blue Jack, impatient and gloomy, was presiding over the council, and the half-breed Inoway was stealing to the northward of the camp, past the picketed horses, to the gloomy shadows in the midst of which the prisoners had lain in bonds.

It thus happened that he approached the spot where the prisoners had been from the northern side. Had Gay Heber remained but a few minutes longer in confinement, she must have been the first he would have encountered. She was gone; Governor Kent was gone; and the outlaw's daughter, Isabel Holley, was left alone.

Not dreaming of the bold rescue of two of the captives, Inoway sought the first of the captives—"the one at the left," as Blue Jack had commanded.

He approached behind Isabel Holley, believing her to be the maiden whom he was to destroy. He did not even look into the shadows beyond her. He was in great haste, and she was the first in his way. She was at "the left," as he approached from the north, and Gay Heber would have been the first in his way had he come a little earlier.

He came close to the weeping girl and touched her on the shoulder. She started abruptly, uttering a suppressed scream.

"Hush!" said Inoway. "No noise. Indian council—Indians talk of burning girl. Kill—kill girl!"

Isabel Holley quivered in every limb.

"Oh, can't my father save me?" she gasped. "Can't he save me?"

It will be remembered that Inoway had been told that Gay Heber was also Blue Jack's daughter. He did not wonder, therefore, at the girl's manner of speech, and his suspicions were not aroused by it to the truth.

"No save!" said Inoway. "The Devil Chief no can save! He send me to hide you in the wood where Indian cannot find you. He will come and take you away soon. Inoway save you. Devil Chief come for you!"

"Oh, hurry then, hurry!" cried the girl. "Quick! I can hear the savages talking. Do hurry! Oh, I wish I had staid at Omaha! I wish I'd never come so far west! And my father, that I've boasted of and thought so rich, is only an outlaw, a desperado, with a hideous face, and he's got a nasty Indian wife, and I wish I were dead! I do! I wish I were dead!"

While these lamentations were in progress, Inoway cut the single strap that bound her and bade her follow him.

She obeyed, and he led her into the forest.

Half an hour later, Blue Jack was striding to and fro, expectant, uneasy, and a prey to wild anxieties, and the Indians were still in the midst of their council, when Inoway came near, hovering about in the shadows outside the circle of light.

Blue Jack beckoned him nearer. He came, hideous with an awful triumph.

"Did you kill her?" asked the Devil Chief hoarsely.

"Yes, Cap'n; the one to the left, you said."

"And—she is dead?"

"Dead, Cap'n, sure enough. She died hard, begged for a life, but when I told her 'twas your orders she fainted dead away. Her hair wasn't so short as you calculated on. Here's the scalp."

He produced from his belt a woman's scalp of long abundant black hair, with a purplish bloom upon it, visible even in the red glow of the flames of the council fire.

Blue Jack recoiled horror-stricken—aghast!

Each thread in those long locks was worth to him a year of life. He knew the hair. Often and often his hand had caressed it. It had crowned the head of the only being he loved. The only soft spot in his wicked nature was his love for his daughter.

"Whose—whose hair is this?" he stammered.

"The girl's, of course. She whined like a baby, and said her father—"

"Oh, my God!" cried Blue Jack, in a wild appeal to the God he had reviled, and whose laws he had transgressed all his life. "My child! my child! Dead! Oh, Heaven!"

He glared around him in a dazed manner. Then the truth came home to his soul. The snare he had set for another had entrapped his own daughter. She was dead, as he had meant Gay Heber to die. He turned upon Inoway like a tiger.

"You devil!" he hissed between his ghastly lips, and drew his revolver and fired.

The shot took effect in the half-breed's breast.

As quick as a flash, Inoway returned the shot. His bullet buried itself in Blue Jack's heart.

Both men fell, and the savages and Burk came crowding around with yells and groans and exclamations.

Blue Jack the outlaw, known also as the Devil Chief, and as Edmund Holley, was dead!—

Dead, with a horrible smile frozen on his wide, thick lips!—dead, with his eyes staring still in utter horror!—dead, with all his crimes upon his head!

He had gone to join his murdered daughter in that world where the evil-doer is judged and condemned by a Being who hates sin, and punishes the sinner. He was gone to his reward.

Inoway was dying. He lived only long enough to tell his story, and then his wicked life went out like the flame of a candle.

The flight of the fugitives was discovered, but there was no pursuit made by the Indians. Sorrowing for the Devil Chief, whose evil daring had endeared him to their savage natures, they made ready to bear him back to the Indian village where his Indian wife awaited his return.

Meanwhile Mark Heber, Gay and Governor Kent followed the Indian trail to the southward, and after an hour or two came out upon the open plain. Relying upon the start he had gained, Mark struck out for the south-west, in the direction of the two-river settlement.

There was moonlight and starlight at a later hour, and Mark guided his course with accuracy. They rode all night. At daybreak they halted beside a stream of water, and Mark shot an antelope. They made a fire and cooked their breakfast, while their horses drank and grazed.

"I see no signs of pursuers, Gay," said Mark. "I believe we must have got some hours start of them. It was a narrow escape, and I'm a firm believer in Providence—and in Mark Heber's luck."

The morning had dawned, and as the three sat down on the grass to eat their breakfast, the red glow of the morning sun irradiated Gay's young face. The Governor, looking at her fully for the first time, started at sight of her and turned white. And now came back to him the words of Blue Jack relative to his granddaughter, of which he had had little time to think during the steady flight that had filled his time since then.

"I beg your pardon, young lady," he said, in a tone of great agitation. "You resemble my daughter-in-law, and Blue Jack even informed me that you were my granddaughter. Your face confirms his statement. You are the living image of my son's young wife at your age. I am Eldridge Kent, formerly a governor of one of the eastern States, and I beg you, Miss Heber, to tell me your history."

Gay caught the infection of his excitement.

"I am not Mark's own sister," she declared tremulously. "I am only a waif, Governor Kent, but Mark has befriended me and loved me and cared for me. I am the child of an insane, wandering lady, who brought me to the door of the Heber farm-house in Seneca county, New York state, thirteen years ago last May. My mother's name was Gabrielle. She talked of my young brother who had been killed by a person named 'Edmund.' I believed Edmund to be my father, and of late I thought he and Blue Jack were identical. I have a few trinkets which my mother left me when she died, and which the Hebers carefully preserved for me. Here they are."

She drew forth her necklace, her mother's wedding ring, and the locket which Blue Jack had longed to possess.

The Governor examined them with emotion. The pictures in the locket were proof sufficient of Gay's story, and of her identity, when added to her singular resemblance to her dead mother.

Governor Kent opened his arms and his heart to her.

"At last! at last!" he said, in a quivering voice. "Thank God that I have lived to restore my grandchild to her heritage. My little Gabrielle—Gabrielle Kent—I shall never lose sight of you again! Your hands must close my eyes in death, Gay, and your face make my sunshine in life. Your trials, let us hope, are all over. Your joys are just beginning."

Mark Heber rejoiced unselfishly in the good fortune of his young adopted sister, but despite his nobleness and generosity, a heavy cloud settled down upon his soul.

The Governor noticed it, but forbore to speak of it.

They resumed their flight after hours of rest, and safely crossed the territory of the Ponca Indians, and the region of the Great Sand Hills, and after days of travel they neared the two-river settlement.

Upon the last night of their bivouac, when they sat by their camp fire, with Gay asleep near them, Mark Heber laid bare his soul to the great statesman, and explained the cause of the gloom that had fallen upon him.

"I love Gay," he said tremulously, "and not as a brother loves a sister, Governor Kent. Her lot and mine will be widely different. She will marry in her own station, and I—and I— Forgive me, sir. I would die for her, and it comes hard to bid farewell to her forever. I have watched over her since the day her wandering mother brought her to our door. She has been the sunshine of my life. May she be the sunshine of yours!"

"You talk as if you were never to see her again," said the Governor wonderingly. "Why, my dear boy, do you think I mean to separate my granddaughter from one who has perilled his life again and again for her? No, you are to go east with us. I want a secretary at present. Will you accept that post until you can get something better to do?"

Mark accepted the offer gratefully—even with tears of joy.

The next day they arrived at the two-river settlement.

The joy of the settlers, who had given them up for dead, may be imagined.

In the very next wagon train going east, Governor Kent, Gay and Mark Heber journeyed, and arrived safely in due time in Chicago. Their progress from that point was easy and pleasant.

No accident occurred during their journey to New York city, and they were safely installed in the palatial up-town home of Governor Kent, whose idol Gay had now become.

Some three years of study and travel were given the young couple. Gay was introduced into society, and had many suitors, but she found that Mark Heber held her heart. He asked her in good time, with the Governor's consent, to be his wife, and she, loving her young hero of the plains above all the petted darlings of society, gave him her hand.

The bridal trip of the young pair was to Heber, to which place Mark presented his grove of cottonwoods for a public park, and other gifts, which made the bestowal of his name upon the place no mere empty honor.

In the few years that have followed the establishment of the settlement of Heber, the great transcontinental railways have been built, and Heber has increased its original population tenfold, and is known as a thriving young city of the plains. The larger share of his fine farm within the city limits, Mark has reserved for his eldest son, a fine little fellow known as Kent Heber. Mark himself is a noble and active man, prominent in all good works, prosperous to an unusual degree; and his bright young wife, piquant and witching as ever, the darling of her aged grandfather, is all the world to her husband, and a most devout believer in Mark Heber's Luck.

THE END.

[We shall commence, in our next number, the publication of another grand story by Mr. LEWIS. It is entitled—

THE PLOT AGAINST HAWLEY;

OR, THE

PRISONER OF DESOLATION.

The perusal of the first installment will convince our readers that it is one of the most thrilling stories that we have ever published. It is something entirely novel, and in working it up Mr. LEWIS has eclipsed all his former efforts.—*Ed. Ledger.*]

NEW YORK LEDGER

ROBERT BONNER, EDITOR AND PROPRIETOR.

NEW YORK, SATURDAY, JULY 6, 1872.

WE always stop the LEDGER at the expiration of the year, or of the time for which it is paid, so that if you wish to continue it, it would be well to renew your subscriptions at least one week before the time expires.

OUR TERMS FOR 1872—NOW IS THE TIME TO SUBSCRIBE.

Single copies, $3 per annum; four copies, $10, which is $2.50 a copy; eight copies, $20. The party who sends us $20 for a club of eight copies, (all sent at one time,) will be entitled to a copy *free*. Postmasters and others who get up clubs, in their respective towns, can afterwards add single copies at $2.50. No subscriptions taken for a less period than one year. Canada subscribers must send twenty cents in addition to the subscription, to pay the American postage. When a draft or money-order can conveniently be sent, it will be preferred, as it will prevent the possibility of the loss of money by mail. The postage on the *Ledger* to all parts of the country is only twenty cents a year, or five cents a quarter, payable at the office where the paper is delivered.

☞ We employ no travelling agents. Address all communications to

ROBERT BONNER, Publisher,
Corner of William and Spruce sts., New York.

Terrible Romances in Reality.

It is difficult for the imagination to conceive of stories so horrible as some that occur in reality. Readers are sometimes inclined to exclaim, "Such a thing is too dreadful to have happened;" or, "Such a character is too bad ever to have existed."

But dreadful things do happen; and they happen for the very reason that bad characters do exist.

The trial of three men for murder, at Marseilles, in France, which resulted in their conviction, developed circumstances of cold-blooded calculation in crime, incredible if they had not been established by incontrovertible evidence, confirmed, finally, by the confession of the accused.

The names of the culprits were TOLEDANO, SITBON and NISSIM. TOLEDANO was twenty-five years of age; SITBON was a very young man. They were both Tunisian merchants, doing business at Marseilles, and they had a young friend, named GREGO, also a merchant, aged only twenty.

TOLEDANO and SITBON were needy, while GREGO, without being rich himself, frequently had large amounts of money belonging to other parties in his possession. His two friends and companions wanted this money so badly that they concluded to put poor GREGO out of the way in order to get it.

How was this to be accomplished? One plan suggested itself after another, and the matter was considered and discussed with all the coolness becoming an important business calculation of an ordinary character.

At first they thought of inviting GREGO to take a walk on a moonlight night, murdering and robbing him, and throwing his dead body in a corner.

This plan was discarded, as too risky, and then one of them proposed to decoy him into a garden, kill him, and bury him; but it was difficult to find a suitable garden, and when they succeeded in looking up one, they were deterred by learning that the proprietor of the garden was a police-officer.

They ultimately decided on hiring a warehouse, inveigling the unsuspecting GREGO into it and assassinating him. This plan was carried into execution. NISSIM, a brutal fellow, who had been a servant of TOLEDANO's uncle, was taken into the plot. The part which he was to perform was to throw a rope around GREGO's neck. TOLEDANO was to strike the victim on the head with a life-preserver, while SITBON was to keep an eye on the street and look out for any interruptions.

This programme, with only slight variations, was carried out. GREGO entered the dimly lighted warehouse in the evening, suspecting no wrong; NISSIM seized him by the throat; SITBON threw the rope around his neck; TOLEDANO smashed in his head, and all was over!

That is, all was over with the ill-fated GREGO; but much that was not included in the plan remained for the assassins.

On opening GREGO's safe only two thousand pounds rewarded their terrible crime, instead of the large sum they had expected.

They boxed the body, and threw it into the water; when, to their horror, they discovered that they had forgotten to weight it, and it floated! They try to regain it, and haul it back into the boat; but in vain. A hinge breaks, and they are obliged to abandon it.

The next morning the corpse is discovered, and the train of circumstances leading to the arrest and conviction of the perpetrators of the dreadful crime is short and straight.

One was sentenced to execution, and the two others to the galleys for life.

These are all facts, proved and confessed in a court of justice; yet, if they were contained in a story, they would be pronounced strange, unnatural and incredible.

◆

Not Complimentary.

The party papers are not particularly complimentary to each other's candidates just now. Their exchanges of civilities and courtesies are not numerous.

It is as it always has been. Political controversies descend inevitably into bitter personalities.

Meanwhile the innumerable readers who tire of the irritation and heat of partisan strife, find relief and refreshment in the cool and shady columns of the *Ledger*.

◆

JAMES GORDON BENNETT, the founder and proprietor of the New York *Herald*, and the leading journalist of America, died at his residence in this city on June 1st, 1872, in the 75th year of his age.

He was a man of genius, of strict probity, and he did much to establish the *independence* of the press.

Mr. BENNETT, although he was a man who always made money a secondary consideration, left a fortune of several millions.

He was entombed at Greenwood, on June 14th, whither his remains were accompanied by over one hundred carriages, containing distinguished citizens, and among them the leading journalists of this city, who were his pall-bearers.

BETTING.

BY HENRY WARD BEECHER.

Mr. BONNER, do you ever bet? Do you think it helps business, tests a man's sincerity, aids his morals, or, in the long run, fills his pockets? How is it with Dexter, Startle, and Pocahontas? Do you think that a bet on their performance would get two seconds less out of them?

I believe that you regard yourself as a Reformer, first, by purging out the last atom of dullness from trotting horses, and getting the uttermost speed out of them; and second, by trotting horses on fair and gentlemanly principles, that is, without the inoculation of gambling bets. How is it, then, that you suffer Dexter's best time to go without technical or turf record, simply because it was time made without betting? Is everything in the hands of gambling jockeys? Are all rules and regulations made for betting men? Is betting such a virtue that he who does not bet is punished, and his horse is refused all recognition? Are there not hundreds and thousands of gentlemen who like a good horse, and who count it no inhumanity to test their speed, who still refuse to bet, or put their nags into a formal public race, where the whole business is organized on the recognition of betting?

You have done something in the way of cultivating a love of fine horses; but is it not even more important that non-betting owners of fast horses should be considered equal, at least, to amateur and professional betting men?

There is another matter—*Betting on Elections*. Can anything be more foreign to good sense, sound principles and real patriotism, than to turn politics into a huge gambling game? Are they not bad enough already? Do they not stir up the passions of men enough, without this Greek fire of betting?

There are two kinds: the larger betting, which means real business, which is carried on in the expectation of making money. There is also a minor betting—for a hat, a suit of clothes, a supper, or any other small matter. This is a mere pander to the other. It breaks down the principle and smothers the conscience. A man who bets five dollars may not be stimulated as much by that small risk, as if he had planted five thousand; but he is as really a gambler. If it is right for a respectable man to bet on an election a pair of gloves or a dozen oysters, then it is right to make up a bank for fifty thousand dollars.

It seems to me that every right-minded man, who has hitherto made bets on the results of political campaigns, should look upon this matter more soberly, and refuse to add a spark to a fire which already burns fiercely enough. A betting man is always on the side of bad company. That way lies all manner of knavery. A man who never bets is on a plain, open, unquestionable ground.

Only a brutal fellow would bet on his mother's chances, if she were critically sick. No man would bet on his brother's life, if he were on trial for treason, nor on his children's chances, if a mortal disease should break out among them. Why not? Even a brute would feel that such betting was dishonorable.

Why should one bet on that which should be to every honest man as sacred as his own household, namely, the affairs of the commonwealth—the interests of patriotism? The virus of gambling is hard to expel when once it is in the blood. But there are thousands of the *Ledger* household who have never learned the pernicious habit. Is it not the *Ledger's* duty to give them sound advice?

◆

An International Nuisance.

Our treaty with England has had more vicissitudes than any other public document we ever heard of. It has been exalted to the highest heaven of diplomacy, and trampled in the muck of public disgust. It has repeatedly been at an end, and as repeatedly revived. It has been abandoned; it has been re-accepted. The governments have arrived at an amicable understanding. The governments have arrived at an unamicable misunderstanding. The whole thing has been settled. The whole thing has been unsettled. Telegrams, letters, dispatches, debates, congratulations, declarations, reservations, demands, refusals, explanations, and explanations of explanations, have followed one another in rapid succession for months, until everybody is hopelessly confused, and has given up trying to understand the merits of the case. Every new attempt on the part of either government to settle the matter seems to operate like the decisions of Milton's old Anarch of Chaos, "which more embroil the fray by which he reigns." The people have become weary of the whole subject, and devoutly wish the treaty were sunk deeper in the ocean than any cable telegram has ever travelled.

◆

Increase of Birds.

The Poughkeepsie *Press* says:

"It is a noticeable fact that the various specimens of the ornithological tribe are more abundant this summer, at least in this latitude, than they have been for years past. Orchard, hedge, forest and by-way seem to be alive with feathered songsters; and the increase is doubtless caused by the recent wise legislative enactments for their protection and preservation."

We believe the increase of birds is not confined to the locality referred to, but is general; and it is undoubtedly attributable to the legislation on the subject, and to the change in public sentiment which causes the wanton destruction of the harmless and sweet songsters to be regarded as vulgar and cruel.

◆

Mending a Foot with an Arm.

The *Waverly* (N. Y.) *Advertiser* relates the particulars of an accident which recently happened to a young man named GEORGE ALBERTSON. One of his feet was badly mashed by a car, and the *Advertiser* says:

The flaps and integuments from the upper part of the foot completely sloughed off, leaving a surface three by five or six inches, of which there were grave doubts as to its healing over. Doctor Harden of Waverly, thinking it a proper case for the newly discovered surgical operation of transplanting flesh, decided to perform it, and some two weeks since did so, taking several pieces from the arm, entirely separating them, and planting them on the foot with perfect success. All the pieces are growing nicely, the wound has assumed a healthy action, and is now healing very fast, both from the little island plantations and from the outer edges.

◆

Are Cats a Nuisance?

This question has arisen in England, under the following circumstances: A man and his wife, living and sleeping in one small room, kept fifteen or sixteen cats in the room with them. An Inspector of Nuisances, under an Act of Parliament, applied to have the cats removed, on the ground that they were a nuisance to the neighborhood; but the magistrate declined to grant a summons, saying he "did not think he could interfere with any one for keeping cats."

◆

DELICATE LANGUAGE.—The *Norristown Herald* will not use the word *lie*. Speaking of a certain statement, the *Herald* declares that it "is a 'willful, malicious, square-toed' no-such-thing!"

A DOUBLE DISTRESS.

A PERSIAN TALE.

BY JOHN G. SAXE.

That blessings lost, though hard to bear,
Are light when weighed with carking care—
Some ill whose ever-goading spite
Afflicts us morning, noon and night—
Sadi, the Persian poet, shows
Most humorously. The story goes—
So sings the bard—that, on a time,
Somewhere within the Eastern clime,
A worthy gentleman, whose wife
Took sudden leave of him, and life,
In deepest lamentation fell
For the dear dame whom long and well
The man had loved—as well might be—
For she was good, and fair to see,
And crowned with every winning grace
Of mind and soul to match her face.
What much his weight of woe increased,
The *mother* of the dear deceased,
A meddling beldame, old and cross,
Remained to help him mourn his loss.
From morn to night the vixen's tongue
He heard—and groaned; and still she clung
Leech-like unto the widowed spouse;
For by the daughter's nuptial vows,
The woman said, it was agreed—
Dared he dispute it?—no indeed!—
Her mother in the house should stay,
A guest—unto her dying day!
In vain the hapless man essayed
To buy her off; in vain portrayed
The pleasures of a trip to Rome;
She still "preferred to stay at home!"
One day amidst the deafening din
Of angry tongues, some friends came in,
With sympathetic voice to pay
Condolence, in the common way;
And, hinting at his recent loss,
Hoped Heaven would help him bear his cross.
"Thanks!" said the mourner, with a sigh,
"My loss is great—I can't deny;
But, for affliction, I must say,
What God was pleased to take away
A less calamity I find
Than what he chose to leave behind!"

◆

SCIP'S SECRET.

BY JUDGE CLARK.

Death seemed to have forgotten Old Orley—probably felt loath, as a true sportsman, to waste a dart upon him. And well he might; for a less "shining mark" than Old Orley, or one apparently less worth the expenditure of ammunition, could hardly be imagined. He had grown as old, seemingly, as he could get. His withered face left Time no room to edge in another wrinkle; and his palsied limbs shook so many different ways that the opposite motions in a manner neutralized each other, and served to steady the old fellow up. He was a miser withal, thought by some to be of untold wealth, its repository being a secret of Old Orley's own, or lying between him and his colored man Scip, the only human being he was ever known to trust. The scene, we had forgotten to mention, is laid in the Old Dominion, and the time dates back of the "Amendments."

Scip, whom Old Orley had taken for a bad debt, was nearly as old, but not as decrepit as his master. A sort of attachment had sprung up between them. Isolated from the rest of the world, Old Orley's social instincts found in Scip their only outlet. Scip, in return, who had experienced more cuffs than kindness at the hands of former masters, requited his present treatment with the loyalty so common to his class.

All things *must* have an end, and even Old Orley's came at last. Scip stood by, in his last moments, rendering kindly offices, and proffering such words of comfort as he could command. "He would be glad," he said, "to go 'long wid Ole Massa, for company, an' wait on him whar he was gwyne, for he knowed his ways better 'n strange darkies would." But it wasn't so ordered; Old Orley had to make the journey alone.

Scip's new *status* was a problem to more than himself. Old Orley had neither kith nor kin. Was Scip his own owner now, and, by virtue of being left in possession, that of the rest of the dead miser's effects?

There was much division of opinion on the subject. The two leading men of the neighborhood, Col. Fluffe and Capt. Scoope, shook their heads over it.

"Not that it makes much difference," said the Captain; "for the real estate isn't worth the taxes, and Scip would eat his head off in a week."

"Jest so," assented the Colonel, who, nevertheless, lost no time in taking an "advice" of Lawyer Burkitt, which was to the effect that the dead man's property "escheated" to the State.

"And the wust kind o' *cheatin'* I call it," muttered the Colonel to himself, who had entertained a sort of indefinite notion, which he had hoped the lawyer's opinion would confirm, that, under the circumstances, the title to Old Orley's possessions would vest in the fortunate finder. And having no doubt but the old miser had left a mint of money hid away, he had set his heart on gaining track of it, by hook or by crook. Scip, he felt convinced, was the only one who knew the secret. But would he *tell?* There was one way to get the truth out of him, and that was to flog it out; but the right to do so must first be secured.

Learning from Lawyer Burkitt that it was the State's Attorney's business to bring escheated property to sale, the Colonel at once applied to that official to do his duty, which the latter grudgingly did, protesting there wouldn't be enough to pay expenses, let alone fees; nevertheless, being a candidate for a second term, he felt constrained to make a show of zeal.

When Scip was brought to the block, there was the liveliest kind of bidding. Col. Fluffe and Capt. Scoope, secretly bent on the same project, had each resolved to become the possessor of Scip and his secret at whatever cost. The Captain struck out with a stiff facer of five hundred, which the Colonel promptly countered with another. Then came a sharp, sustained fire of hundreds; then a rattling volley of fifties; then the Colonel spurted a hundred. The Captain's blood was now up, and raising the last bid two hundred and fifty dollars at a jump, fairly distanced his competitor and came out winner. Scip had as lief been knocked down to Old Nick as either of them; still, he felt not a little proud of having brought twenty-five hundred dollars, when the market price of likely young fellows wasn't over a thousand.

The same day Scip was summoned to the presence of his new master, whom he found flipping flies from the wainscot with his riding-whip, by way of keeping his hand in.

"Do you know where your old master kept his money, Scip?" asked the Captain.

"'Spec' I does," said Scip.

"Can you take me to the spot?"

"'Spec' I kin."

"You must conduct me there to-night, Scip, and swear never to breathe a word about it to mortal. If you break your oath"—with a crack of the whip like a pistol-shot—"I'll flog the black soul out of you! Do you swear?"

"I does—*by Hokey!*"

At a late hour, Scip, lantern in hand but not alight, and spade on shoulder, led the way to a secluded spot in the rear of the hovel lately tenanted by Old Orley. Striking a match, he lit the lantern, and closely examining the ground, stopped near a broad stone, which he shoved aside. The removal of a few spadefuls of earth disclosed the top of a wooden box about a foot square.

"Dat's IT," said Scip.

The Captain was on his knees in an instant—it was not the first time he had knelt to mammon—tearing his nails from the flesh in impatient efforts to force the box from its bed.

"What are you doin' thar?" shouted a voice, followed close by its owner, Colonel Fluffe, who had dogged his late competitor's steps.

"And what are *you* doing here?" angrily retorted the Captain.

"Detectin' of a robbery, appearently," replied the other.

The two exchanged glances for a moment. Neither would have rated the other's life at a pin's fee; but in both, the passion for money was stronger than hatred.

"What interest have you in the matter?" at length said the Captain doggedly.

"A tax payer's intrust in public property," was the answer.

"And am not I, too, a tax payer?"

"Then let's divide equal."

The Captain saw he was at the other's mercy. So, dismissing Scip about his business, with a reminder of his oath, which Scip solemnly repeated, with the Colonel's assistance he pried the box from its place, and the brace of honest tax payers repaired with their prize to a place of safety.

"Of *course* you'll only insist on sharing the balance, after deducting the price of Scip," hinted the Captain, poising the chisel with which he was about to raise the lid.

"Let's see how much thar is fust," replied the Colonel cautiously.

Under the lid was a lining of lead; under that a layer or two of wrapping paper; and under that—such rolls of bank-notes as their wildest avarice had never dreamed of. There was twenty thousand dollars! all in bills of the same bank. But—every cup of bliss has its dregs—*the bank had broken ten years before!*

The failure of that bank had been a sore stroke to Old Orley, but had not deprived him of his all. Leaving the worthless notes to moulder in their grave, which he ever afterward shunned as an unhallowed spot, the remainder of his wealth, still a snug sum, he hid in another place, which, too, was known to Scip.

Thither, as soon as the Colonel and the Captain's backs were turned, Scip hied his way, and pocketing the money, (to which—not having taken an "advice" of Lawyer Burkitt, and never having heard of *Escheatery*—he had no idea any one had a better right than himself,) before daylight was many miles on the road to Freedom, which he finally reached in safety.

◆

OUR GOOD MOTHERS.

One would suppose, to read all that is printed about modern women, that the good old-fashioned matronly virtues were quite extinct—that there were, literally, no mothers who delighted in their own children, and who would not rather, if possible, ignore all personal supervision of them, from the cradle to adult years. Now, could the roofs of two-thirds of the houses in New York be lifted, we should see lovely pictures of happy mothers and children quite sufficient to convince chronic croakers that marriage and motherhood are not the "total failures" they pronounce them to be.

I can reckon scores of women who with luminous faces will bend over their little children to-night, before laying their heads upon their pillows, and thank God with full hearts that they are counted worthy to bear this blessed name. I can reckon scores of mothers, who, though sometimes almost fainting by the way, would not delegate any of the duties which no one could so well or so faithfully perform for their young children. Do not believe they have not their compensation for any and every sacrifice they make for them, in the clinging love and trust which such well-cared-for children alone feel for such mothers.

We do not wonder that careless, pleasure-loving, shirking mothers shun the nursery where no little face brightens at their coming; where perhaps the simple, warm-hearted servant in charge, whose life has had little enough brightness, has more happiness in that little child's soft caresses and musical laughter than its own selfish mother could ever know.

The day will come when pleasure has ceased to charm; when she would gladly, just for companionship's sake, buy back the love she has recklessly thrown away; but a jewel like that, this open sesame to a child's heart which God puts into every mother's hand, is not to be regained when once despised and thrown away.

FANNY FERN.

◆

A Public-Spirited Widow.

A widow, living in Franklin county, in this State, recently attempted to apply Lynch law to a bull-dog that worried her children on their way to and from school. The dog was noted for his irritable temper and aggressive disposition, and had been a terror to the children of the neighborhood for over a year. The widow, armed with an old horse pistol, that had belonged to her husband, and a stout rope, set out with her children—a boy and girl—for the school-house. On passing the abode of the owner of the dog, the animal rushed out at the children, as usual. The mother levelled her pistol and fired. The ball took effect in the dog's shoulder, and he fell yelping to the ground. The mother then threw a slipping noose, at the end of her rope, over his head, drew the knot tightly around his throat, and began to drag him toward a road-side tree. By this time the owner of the dog had come out to see what was the matter, and perceiving the peril of his favorite, he rushed to his rescue. The avenging mother did not condescend to enter into any contest with the owner of the dog, but allowed him to remove the rope and carry his pet into the house. Two days afterward he carried the dog's body out of the house. The neighbors overwhelmed the widow with thanks for her spirited conduct, and the children now go to and from school without molestation.

◆

Borrowed Trouble.

Half the misery of mankind is borrowed misery. For instance, our neighbor's child is taken sick with measles. Immediately one begins to conjure up frightful visions about one's own children, when, very likely, they will escape the contagion altogether or get through it very lightly. Or, we are taken ill ourselves. Immediately we aggravate every symptom, and banish possible sleep by computing the probable loss to our business if "laid up," and indulging in fears that we may not recover at all—forgetting those golden words, "Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof."

◆

A Not Uncommon Parental Mistake.

There are parents who are so afraid that their children will have an inordinate passion for dress that they never allow them to have anything that is tasteful and becoming. Such a course is almost sure to produce the very result they wish to avert. The better way is to conform sufficiently to the general fashions to save a child from the mortification of unpleasant criticism from its companions, while, at the same time, care is taken not to foster a love of vanity and display.

◆

Inquisitive Children.

Never laugh at a child when it asks a "foolish question." It is not foolish to the child. If a child is sensitive, one instance of laughter and ridicule, in such a case, might forever chill its aspirations after self-education. No matter how trivial a child's question may seem to be, it is entitled to a prompt and kind answer.

THE LATEST STYLE.

It is very beautiful. The costume of the fashionable lady was never handsomer than it is to-day; and for those who can afford to be in style, it is all very well. The goods are bought. Madame the modiste takes a measure, and by and by sends home the dress and the bill. Rather a pleasant operation, on the whole. But to the wife of the man of moderate salary, or to the woman who supports herself by some not overpaid branch of industry, what is the result of all this elegant style and artistic dress-making? The result is simply misery.

Thirty yards of silk are needed for a dress to-day, where fifteen would do two years ago; twice the bill for dress-making, or twice the time for home-made work, which, after all, looks poorly; one dress where she had three before, if her means have not widened and lengthened with her dress pattern; and a dread of wearing out that precious "best suit," that keeps her at home many a day when she longs to be abroad. It is rather a subject of reflection, when it has come to such a pass that, under forty-five or fifty dollars, no lady can obtain a dress "fit to go to church in." And what is one dress, even with the neatness of a Quakeress, and all the caution possible, in this city, where friends are separated by long miles, and a call—unless one hires a carriage, which such persons as I am speaking of are not likely to do—involves travelling in dirty cars, and being crushed, trampled, and spit upon?

The belle whose papa made his millions by shoddy transactions during the war, or the wife of some lucky Wall street man, may say: "Common people need not dress as we do."

But, begging her pardon, I do not speak of common people. Ladies who naturally desire to look well and to be in the mode, are often obliged to live within a very limited income, which, though sufficient for plain elegance, is inadequate for the overload of finery which one must have to-day, or feel uncomfortable. Any woman will confess that she had almost as soon not have a silk dress as to have one which is untrimmed; and the trimming is often more expensive than the dress.

How much comfort, how many books, how much music, company and open-air exercise ladies sacrifice every year to keep themselves in flounces and light kid gloves, no one can really say; but it is a manifest fact that people do give up these pleasures, which are expensive ones if indulged in without restraint, who are never seen except in "the latest styles," on the promenade.

To look well, and as pretty as possible, is right; but need we quite imitate the stage dresses in the society plays? Or need we, who desire to pass along the streets quite unnoticed, array ourselves as do those whose ambition is to excite as much notice as possible?

A little while ago, this was not the case. To-day I should like to know how one may know Lady Clara Vere de Vere from Anonym. Not by her dress; often not by the absence of pearl-powder and painted eyebrows, Grecian bend and unladylike carriage. Dresses which English ladies of rank wear in their carriages only, wobble down the muddy street, and are trodden on by dirty feet at every block. Looking after them, and looking at one's own dirty flounces after a walk, what woman can help thinking, "After all, there was some sense, if no beauty, in the Bloomer costume."

Not many years ago we discarded long dresses for the street. We had clean skirts for a while. In the name of common-sense, why could it not have remained an American fashion to refuse a train for out of doors locomotion? Some girls even adopted the style for dancing parties. Every one approved. I never heard a woman speak with dislike of the sensible innovation.

Where are we now? Back again in the mud. I speak from experience. At first when my dress-maker said, "They're wearing long skirts, I'm sorry to say," I said, "I *won't*." I ordered the regular number of inches. I looked with satisfaction at the unworn braid upon my dress, and thought how often it would have to be renewed in three months if the skirts trailed. But, alas! I yielded an inch on the spot; and on the way home, seeing that others were already out in long skirts, my strength of mind forsook me. I sent a messenger in hot haste to the dress-maker's, and I had as long a dress as anybody when it came home. Could I have it said of me, "Her skirt clears the ground; but those writing women always are *so* odd?" No.

It is not a sermon that I preach, sisters in affliction. When I am eighty, I may be comfortable in sensible clothes. I couldn't be now; I don't expect you to be; but isn't it a great pity? You know, just as well as I do, that it does us no good, but a great deal of harm, to be so fine. You don't care for it yourself, but then everybody expects it of you. When you have used your new dress for a street sweeper, you feel remorseful. Your bills wear upon your mind, and if you have a husband, you have had arguments about them; but you can't do anything—neither can I. We can only sit down and wonder how it came so.

Once the Empress Eugenie could have put us all into short frocks and pantalettes. Probably some one could do it now; but I hardly expect any one to be so kind.

A leader of fashion who knew that the Quaker style became her, might adopt it; and we should follow our leader, of course. And upon my word, when I reflect upon the pinings and repinings, the expenses and debts, the quarrels and tears that the present styles have occasioned, I do not think that it would be impious to make their abolition a subject of prayer.

M. K. DALLAS.

◆

Get Married Early.

The *Rochester* (Minnesota) *Post* is not satisfied with people getting married, but insists on their getting married young. It thus rebukes a citizen who was a little slow in committing matrimony:

"John Nichols came back from Iowa a couple of weeks ago, bringing, as will be seen by our marriage notices, a bride with him. We congratulate John on this very proper, *though tardy*, act on his part, and wish them both long life and prosperity."

◆

Burning Out Bears—Capture of Two Cubs Alive.

[From the Turf, Field and Farm.]

The fire which recently swept over the mountains in the vicinity of Woodstock, N. Y., afforded the three sons of Mr. John Hoyt an opportunity to make an important capture. An old bear and two cubs were discovered on a peak, watching somewhat anxiously the course of the flames raging below. In order to cut off their retreat, a fire was kindled on the opposite side of the mountain. The flames swiftly crept up to where the animals were stationed. With a bold rush the old bear escaped from the cordon of fire, while the two cubs sought refuge in a giant hemlock tree. The three hardy boys now made a determined assault on the cubs. One of them climbed the tree and shook them to the ground, and as they fell and rebounded from the earth with the elasticity of a ball, they were seized by the two boys waiting below. The conflict was short, sharp and decisive. The cubs fought, but their feet were securely bound after a brief struggle, and then the three boys carried their captives home in triumph. The wounds amounted to a few scratches and a bite in the finger. So the great fire in the mountains had its romantically pleasant shades as well as its terribly dark side.

◆

Hold Him.

[From the Poughkeepsie Press.]

A young lady who was recently out riding, became alarmed when the horse began to kick, and naively requested her beau to get out and hold the animal's leg.

◆

—The silliest of all errors is when young men think they forfeit their claims to originality if they acknowledge any truth that has been discovered by others before them.

CLOSE BY THE DOOR.

BY ETHEL LYNN.

I will stop in this long stretch of shadow
To think of it. I, Davie Grey,
Am a very old man—so they tell me—
Just eighty years old yesterday.
It don't seem so very long either,
Since I counted my years half a score,
And looked strangely at old Deacon Gridley,
Half asleep in the chair by the door.

Then I thought, "'Tis for ever and ever:
How long and how weary a span
Must eighty years be to live over!"
And I pitied the sleepy old man.
I haven't done much for the Master,
Nor much for his creatures, I know;
I should have worked better and faster
Before the years hurried me so.

Eighty years! They hold shadow and sunshine,
A home, a few acres of land,
A few loving words from the children,
A clasp that dropped out of my hand;
The sound of a lullaby loving,
Of mother's low prayer by my bed;
The echo of clods on her coffin,
The day daughter Nellie was wed;

A remembrance of bugles in battle,
Of wounds, and awaking again;
Long sunshiny days without shadow,
And tempests of horrible pain.
Then holidays seemed crowded closer,
Like beads on a string that is frayed—
It will scatter them shortly—some Beulahs,
Some Marahs, some sin-burdens laid;
But, oh, such a poor little record
To write underneath the fourscore!
Not an item to buy me admission,
Close up though I be, to the Door.

Stop! What was that beautiful story
The school-children sang yesterday?
I can't quite remember. Ah, truly,
They sang of "the Door," and "the Way."
'Tis the beautiful, tender old story.
How loving our Father must be
To send, out of mist and distraction,
Such comfort and counsel to me!
So I'll stand by the Door till the Master
Shall beckon me in by and by,
Safe guided where He shall conduct me;
My place isn't up very high.

A BONE of CONTENTION;

—OR—

The Waldemar Succession.

By MRS. HARRIET LEWIS,

AUTHOR OF "THE HAMPTON MYSTERY," "THE BAILIFF'S SCHEME," "THE LADY OF KILDARE," "THE OLD LIFE'S SHADOWS," "A DARING GAME," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER V.

HONOR GLINT.

Upon the same day on which Grimrod, Lord Waldemar's business manager, returned to Yorkshire from the Continent with Mrs. Watchley and her young charge, and only a few hours before the Baron's formal recognition of Miss Floyd as his granddaughter, and the future successor to the Waldemar title and estates, events were transpiring in another portion of England, a narration of which is essential to the proper development of our story, and to them we now invite the attention of the reader.

In the neighboring county of Lancashire, in an outskirt of the fine manufacturing town of Bolton-Le-Moors, stood—and still stands—a pretty, red-brick cottage of considerable pretensions, in the midst of a fine lawn and garden, and with paddock and stable attached. The house is roomy, two stories in height, with a red-slated roof and clustered chimneys, plentiful gables, pert dormer windows, a quaint oriel over the stone porch, one-storied bays opening upon a grassy terrace, and it is half embowered in clinging vines, comprising ivies, Virginia creepers and wisterias.

This dwelling, known as Red House, had belonged to the family of Glint for a full century, descending from father to eldest son without a single break in the line of succession. The present owner was Capt. Tom Glint of the steamship *Argonaut*, plying between Liverpool and Alexandria, in Egypt.

Capt. Glint was an honest, upright, whole-souled man, a little past middle age, impulsive and generous, as sea-faring men are apt to be. He had sailed the Mediterranean for five and thirty years, having begun his career in a humble position, and had worked his way up to the post of commander, which office he had worthily filled for over twenty years. He knew every port in the Mediterranean as well as he knew Liverpool, and he knew the sea far better than he knew the shore.

Capt. Glint was now absent upon a voyage to Alexandria. Some two years before the opening date of our story, the Captain had married a handsome and ambitious widow, who, with her two children, the offspring of her first marriage, were now quartered at the Red House.

Upon the March day upon which we have chosen to present the Red House and its inmates to the reader, at a late hour of the afternoon, Mrs. Glint sat alone in her cozy drawing-room, with her feet upon the fender, and a thoughtful frown upon her face.

She was some forty years of age, and, as we have said, still handsome. Her brown hair was unstreaked with gray, her complexion was well preserved, and her lips and cheeks were as blooming as a girl's. This bright bloom, however, was not a gift of Nature, but was purchased in bottles at Madame Rachel's in London, or in Manchester, of some similar vender. Her figure was still good, and she clothed it in rich and fashionable attire, delighting in display. Her first husband had squandered her small fortune and his own, leaving her children penniless. During the period of her widowhood she had lived upon the sums of money reluctantly doled out to her by her own and her late husband's relatives, and had looked about anxiously for a successor to her departed lord. Chance had thrown generous Capt. Glint in her way, and she had worked upon his sympathies and regularly laid siege to his heart, after carefully ascertaining the amount of his income, the precise figure of his salary, and the exact state of his general finances. The widow's family was good, and she well knew the art of fascination. As might be expected, the unsuspecting fly walked into the spider's parlor, and was duly "gobbled up." In other words, Mrs. Amelia Milner married Capt. Tom Glint and came to reign at the Red House, with her two children.

Having so well provided for herself, it behooved Mrs. Glint to provide for her offspring. Her son Wolsey Milner, a young man of twenty, had been articled to a Liverpool barrister. Her daughter Clarette, aged eighteen, resided at the Red House, and was treated by Capt. Glint with great kindness and generosity, although it must be owned he scarcely liked her.

"It is true the Captain is generous to Wolsey and Clarette," mused Mrs. Glint, in pursuance of the line of thought that had occupied her mind for the past hour, "but they are only dependents upon him. He has insured his life for my benefit, thus providing well for me in the event of his death, but he will not leave a penny to my children. He has the Red House, which is freehold, and five thousand pounds in the bank at Liverpool, which he has saved up during his long bachelor life, and these are to go to that girl—a mere pauper, whom he picked up and educated and made a fine lady. He told me that he had made a will constituting her his heir, and this will was made since our marriage. It's a shame—a downright shame. The Captain makes the girl his idol. He never loved me half so much as he loves her. He actually loves the ground she steps on. If she'd only disappoint his hopes in some way—if he could only be made to think her unworthy—he might be induced to cast her off, and to constitute my children his heirs. But I do not believe he would hear a word against her from the angel Gabriel himself, unless the proofs were overwhelming. Let me see. How can I get rid of the girl, and clear the way for my own children?"

She knotted her brows over the difficult problem, and a scheming look appeared in her eyes.

For a little while her thoughts scarcely shaped themselves in words. The firelight from the glowing grate fell in a bright flood upon her dress and upon her darkening face. The light of the short afternoon seemed fading, as it streamed palely in through the partings in the red brocade curtains shading the windows.

At length Mrs. Glint's thin lips compressed themselves in an expression of determination. She had decided upon her course. She leaned forward and pulled fiercely at the tassel of the bell cord that hung beside the chimney, and then sank back in her chair in an expectant attitude.

The summons was answered by the trim little house-maid, and Mrs. Glint said imperiously:

"Tell Miss Honor I wish to see her immediately."

The maid withdrew. Soon after a light step was heard in the hall, the door opened, and a young girl came into the room.

The new-comer was known as Honor Glint. She had received her quaint name from the Captain, whose mother had worthily borne it, and it well befitted its present owner.

Honor Glint was about seventeen years of age, slender and graceful as a willow. She was very beautiful, with a tender, witching loveliness that was strangely winsome and sweet. Her hair, full of kinks and waves, was like pale gold; her complexion was very fair, and her great soul-lit eyes were intensely black, "midnight eyes," that contrasted singularly with the rare golden tint of her hair. Her face was bright and frank and sunny, and was in itself a poem. Her beauty, in brief, was of a rare and splendid type, and her soul was in keeping with it.

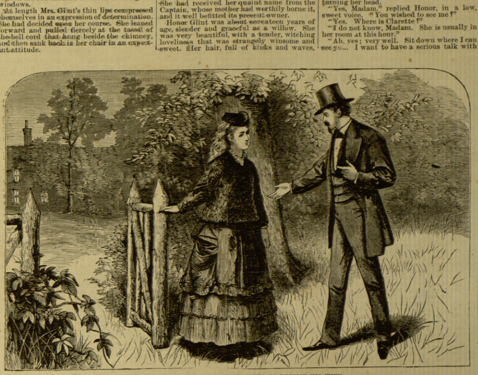
"Is that you, Honor?" said Mrs. Glint, half turning her head.

"Yes, Madam," replied Honor, in a low, sweet voice. "You wished to see me?"

"Yes. Where is Clarette?"

"I do not know, Madam. She is usually in her room at this hour."

"Ah, yes; very well. Sit down where I can see you. I want to have a serious talk with you. I told my dear husband when I married him that I would try and be a mother to you, Honor, and you must own that I have been a mother to you since you came home from boarding-school, six or eight months ago. You have been home since last midsummer, in fact. How old are you, Honor?"



DARREL MOER IMPLORING HONOR GLINT TO BECOME HIS WIFE.

The young girl sat down upon a low chair at the corner of the hearth, just out of the glow of the fire, and in the pale light that streamed through the curtains, as she replied:

"I am about seventeen, Madam."

"Then you don't know exactly?" said Mrs. Glint, who, however, was perfectly acquainted with the young girl's history.

Honor replied in the negative.

"At any rate, you are seventeen," said Mrs. Glint, in a calculating voice. "At your age, many young women are earning good salaries as governesses, teachers, and so on. Do you never think of your future?"

The girl's fair face flushed, and her big black eyes opened yet more widely in surprise, but she answered respectfully:

"I used to dream of being papa's housekeeper some day, but of course he will not need me to keep house for him now. But he needs me in many ways, Madam, and he often says he could not spare me."

"Papa!" sneered Mrs. Glint. "I hate the word from your lips. 'Papa!' Tom Glint is not your father, and you should not call him so."

"He taught me to call him papa in my early childhood," said Honor quietly, "and I cannot relinquish the habit except at his command. Clarette calls him so—"

"Clarette is no criterion for you!" interrupted Mrs. Glint harshly. "Clarette is his step-daughter, and has an actual right to call him father. But you—who are you?"

"I—I don't know," said the girl, her voice quivering.

"No, you don't know, and no one else knows. You are a nameless foundling, with no claim even to your name of Honor Glint. If the Captain had not been foolish and soft-headed, as well as soft-hearted, he would have sent you to some orphan asylum years and years ago. His prodigality will prove his ruin. You needn't flash your eyes at me, Honor Glint, nor let your temper show itself. I am telling you the truth. You are an object of Captain Glint's charity—that's all!"

"I am more than that," cried Honor. "I am an object of his love. He is great and good and tender, and I pray Heaven that I may live to reward him for all his goodness to me—dear, dear papa!"

"There it is again—'papa!' Is it so hard for you to realize that you are not even his distant relative?" demanded Mrs. Glint, in a tone of irritation. "He picked you up on the island of Malta sixteen years ago, when you were a mere baby of a year old. He was master of a vessel then that touched at all the Mediterranean ports for purposes of trade."

"Papa has told me all that many times," said Honor gently, as Mrs. Glint paused an instant to make a vigorous lunge at the fire with the small steel poker.

"I dare say he has," exclaimed Mrs. Glint, "but I choose that you shall hear it again, and from my lips. Captain Glint was walking through the streets of Valetta, in the part called the Marina, and came down upon the quay, where his boat was waiting to take him to his ship, which lay out in the Great Harbor at anchor, when a woman with a little child in her arms came up to him and addressed him in English. She was a common looking person, but Captain Glint chose to think that the little child was of superior birth, because she was well dressed, and was very fair and dainty. Woman and child were both English. The woman begged a passage home to England in the Captain's ship. It was not a passenger vessel, but Captain Glint never had the heart to deny a woman's prayer, and he questioned her, and finally consented to bring her to England."

"Heaven bless him!" breathed Honor softly, her fair face glowing with sudden tenderness and gratitude.

"The woman told him," continued Mrs. Glint, regardless of the interruption, "that her name was Margaret Cropsey, and that the child was her nursling, whom she was conveying to its friends in England. She said that she was just come from Trieste, where her mistress had died, and that she had faithfully promised her dying mistress, the child's mother, to convey the child to England, and to take her to some obdurate old relative, and implore him to befriend her. The woman had paid her passage to Malta after the death of her mistress, with the idea that Malta lay on her route home, and she could get passage cheaper from Valetta than from Trieste. But on arriving at Valetta her money had been stolen from her, or she had lost it, and she was penniless. More than that, although Captain Glint did not know it at the moment, she was stricken with fever. He took her on board with the child, and that was the worst day's work he ever did. If any man ever possessed a foolish heart in his burly, overgrown body, that man is Captain Tom Glint."

"He is the noblest, kindest and most generous of men," the girl murmured softly, a world of love glowing in her tender, sombre eyes.

"Such expressions would come better from my lips than yours," said Mrs. Glint severely. "But I must rehearse to you the whole of your history, as a prelude to something else I wish to say to you. The Captain set sail with his new passengers, and on the very next day Margaret Cropsey was raving in the delirium of fever. On arriving at Marseilles, as she had grown worse instead of better, he procured, through the English consul, her admission to a hospital, and came on to England without her. He could not bear to leave the English baby in a foreign land, and made a fool of himself by bringing her home with him. The child could run about and lisp a few words, but the Captain did not even know her name. The nurse had called her Daisy, but that's no name for a Christian child, and must have been a mere pet name. The Captain brought the little one to his own home, and put her in charge of his sister, who then kept house for him. As she had no name of her own, he gave her his mother's name of Honor Glint. His sister married a few years later, and went to Canada, and the Captain then put the child—yourself—at school. On his next voyage to the Mediterranean, he went to the hospital at Marseilles and inquired for Margaret Cropsey. He found that she had recovered from her illness and been discharged. Where she was gone, no one knew. My opinion is, that the woman had deliberately planned to rid herself of the child, and having accomplished that, was careful to disappear, and leave no trace of herself."

Honor's cheeks reddened with indignation.

"It is not so," she exclaimed. "There was some fatality in the matter. Between the periods of Margaret Cropsey's entrance into the hospital and her recovery from fever, the consul was recalled to England and assigned to a new post in South America. He died in the Brazils a year or two afterward. It was the consul who obtained Mrs. Cropsey's admission into the hospital, and not papa—a mistake that seems slight, and of no importance, but which is really of the greatest importance, for papa's name did not appear in the application, and only the consul knew the names of papa and his ship. My theory of the case is this: Mrs. Cropsey was ill of the fever when she was taken on board the *Wilberforce*—papa's ship. The name of the vessel and the captain therefore made no impression upon her mind, and her subsequent illness completely blotted them from her mind. I think that when she recovered from her fever she found the consul gone, and could get no clue to the name of the ship, or the captain who had befriended her."

"Why didn't she advertise then?" demanded Mrs. Glint. "Why didn't she leave her address with the new consul, and beg him to let her know if the captain came again to Marseilles? She must have known that the captain would try to look her up, for the sake of the child. No, no, Honor; the woman was glad to abandon the child. I dare say the story of the dead mistress was all made up, to enlist sympathy. That class of people are wonderfully artful. I've no doubt whatever that you are Margaret Cropsey's own child, and that she is living somewhere at service exulting in the thought that you have been brought up a lady. She may even know where you are, and all about you. The captain has been finely imposed upon all these years. He has kept you at an expensive boarding-school, and has dressed you extravagantly; and last autumn, despite my remonstrances, he took you on a trip with him to Alexandria, and would not allow even my Clarette to accompany you. You had a maid, and travelled, I dare say, as a lady of quality. Now how much longer do you intend to subject him to such expense?"

"Captain Glint adopted me as his daughter, and I owe him the duty of a daughter," said Honor. "I must obey him and love him so long as I live."

"That sounds very fine," sneered Mrs. Glint, "but I understand what it means. You will flatter Captain Glint so long as it pays. Let me tell you, Miss, that it was all very well before the Captain married, but things have changed since then. The Captain now would be glad to be relieved of the burden of your support. He is too generous and delicate to tell you so, but he confidently expects you to seek a situation as governess. You would be most mercenary and grasping to expect more than you have already received from him. He has lavished large sums of money upon you, and he now desires you to help yourself. It was proper for him to spend money upon an adopted child when he had no family of his own; but he now has a family, and his money is due to them. Do you comprehend?"

Honor did not reply save by an inclination of the head. She did not know, and Mrs. Glint did know that the Captain had married Mrs. Milner more even upon Honor's account than upon his own. The widow was well connected and went in good society. The Captain had no lady relative to take charge of Honor when she should leave school, and introduce her to the world, and he was obliged by the nature of his profession to be away from home a large share of the time, and he could not leave his adopted daughter alone at the Red House without a chaperon. He had thought that Clarette Milner would be a pleasant companion for Honor, and that Mrs. Milner—now Mrs. Capt. Glint—would chaperone the two young girls, and love Honor next to her own daughter. It is scarcely necessary to say that he little comprehended the nature of the woman he had married, and little dreamed of the trouble his marriage would bring to his darling.

Honor's silence irritated Mrs. Glint.

"If you had a proper share of delicacy," continued the Captain's wife, "you would yourself have proposed your withdrawal. The Captain's wife is nearer to him than his adopted daughter. Clarette is not fond of you, and I find your presence distasteful to me. It is not proper for you to remain here, and I cannot tolerate your presence longer. I am willing to befriend you, but the Captain cannot keep us both here, let me assure you of that."

Honor's dainty head was uplifted proudly, as she answered:

"Your objections to me, Madam, can be stated to papa on his return. He will provide a new home for me—"

"At fresh expense! The Captain is chivalrous even to folly, and an appeal to him would result in his continuing to saddle himself with the burden of your support. His salary is only four hundred pounds a year, and his entire income is not over eight hundred pounds. I know I seem severe to you, but I am speaking the words the Captain is too delicate to express. I should think you would desire to relieve him of the burden of your support. You have not half the claim upon him that Clarette has—in fact, you have not the shadow of a claim upon him whatever. He would love you all the more if he saw in you the desire to support yourself."

"But what can I do?" asked the girl, with a hunted expression on her beautiful face.

"You can get a situation to teach in a school, or as governess in a family," responded Mrs. Glint mercilessly. "You could advertise, or your former teachers might find a situation for you."

"I don't think I should like teaching," said Honor, in a trembling voice. "Papa has always told me that I am the same to him as his own daughter. I—I can't leave papa. And I am so young, and I have enjoyed my life so much. It will be hard to leave the Red House and all I love. Oh, Madam, let me stay as your companion, as your hired maid even—"

"And set all the country-side to gossiping, and appeal continually to the Captain's affection for you? No. You must go from home, and the sooner the better. You must be away before the Captain returns. If you don't like to work, why don't you marry?"

"I—I never thought of marriage!"

Mrs. Glint laughed disagreeably.

"Girls always say that," she remarked coldly. "You have been introduced into society, and I have found that you attract a hundred-fold the attention that is given to my modest little Clarette. Your gay manner, and your odd style of beauty—for of course you know you are beautiful, though in my eyes not to be compared to my Clarette—attract the gentlemen strangely. You have had an offer or two already. You cast my Clarette completely into the shade, much to the poor child's mortification and my own. This I will not bear longer. You can marry any day you please. There is Mr. Wiltsie of Crow Hall who asked you to marry him. He is a good match. Clarette would have jumped at the offer, but you refused him."

"He is old and lame, and I did not like him," cried Honor impetuously. "He wants a wife to play whist with him, and to nurse his gouty foot. He won't do for me."

"Indeed! Perhaps you look higher, Miss? Possibly you have raised your eyes to Capt. Glint's friend, Sir Hugh Tregaron, the Cornish Baronet?" said Mrs. Glint, with a sneer.

The girl's cheeks flushed hotly, and she averted her head.

"You won't get him," said Mrs. Glint coarsely. "The Tregarons are a proud race, and Sir Hugh would never marry a mere foundling—a nobody—an object of charity, who but for Captain Glint would have been in some pauper asylum. It's doubtful even if you can entrap your other admirer who has been staying these three months at Lynshire Place. I refer to Mr. Moer—Mr. Darrel Moer. He is a nephew of Lord Waldemar, and will probably be the next Baron Waldemar. He told me so himself. He said that his lordship's son was probably dead, leaving no heirs. He is dead in love with you, and his love may conquer his pride. Why don't you marry him?"

"I—I don't love him."

"Love him! I should hope not. You would not be modest if you did love a man to whom you are not even engaged. I hate that mawkish word. If you could only secure Mr. Moer and his prospective title, the Captain would be very proud of you. But enough of this. You must provide yourself with a situation of some sort, or marry some one immediately. I have come to a decision about you at last. I give you three days to find yourself a new home. If you have not found one at the end of that period, I shall send you away from the Red House."

Honor looked startled—even appalled.

"Where will you send me?" she asked.

"I shall send you away as I would send a maid of whom I had no longer need," replied Mrs. Glint pitilessly. "You can go where you choose. It is nothing to me."

"I will go to an inn and wait for papa to come back—"

"And create a scandal and domestic dissension, all to gratify your own selfishness and indolence!" cried Mrs. Glint. "I don't think the Captain will like you the better for it. Besides, I shall have my version of the story to tell him, and Clarette will bear me witness. Let the consequences be what they may, out of this house you go within three days. This is final!"

Her cold eyes, her implacable countenance, the cruel expression of her compressed lips, all told young Honor that an appeal to Mrs. Glint would be worse than useless. The girl rose up pale and sorrowful, a defiant look in her dusky eyes, and without a word went out from the woman's presence. A moment later Mrs. Glint beheld her hurrying across the lawn in the gloaming.

"She is going to walk off her excitement," she said to herself, with a complacent smile. "I've broken the ice at last, and there's no retreat from the step I've taken. The girl goes out of this house this week. It will go hard with me if I don't make my Clarette the heiress of Captain Glint in this girl's stead!"

CHAPTER VI.

DARREL MOER AGAIN.

Honor Glint had caught up her fur jacket and coquettish little turban from the hall rack, had hastily donned them, and had hurried out from the Red House with no definite object in view, with only the instinct of a hunted creature to hide itself. There was a choking sensation in her throat, a keen, sharp pain in her heart, and a sudden and intolerable aching in her brain. She felt a longing to creep away into some secluded place, and there reflect upon the abrupt change in her life, which had until now been all sunshine. The air of the house seemed suddenly close and oppressive, and she absolutely panted for fresh air.

She crossed the garden, and let herself into the paddock through a small gate in the wall. The paddock was usually occupied by her shaggy pony, but he was now comfortably stalled in the snug little stable, and the paddock was empty. She crossed the five or six acres of springing turf, and let herself out at an opposite gate into a field which belonged to a larger neighboring estate. A few minutes' further brisk walk carried her beyond all view from the Red House, and brought her to a rustic stile between two fields. She mounted to the top of the stile, and sat down upon the little landing or platform.

The spot was not especially romantic, but it had a certain rustic beauty to be perceived by an eye trained to look for loveliness. On both sides of the stile lay the bare and deserted fields; the river was within view, and the houses and spires of Bolton were close at hand. This was a favorite resort of young Honor Glint, and here she had spent many happy, thoughtful and dreamy hours. Her feet had turned to this place instinctively in her first sorrow.

The light of day was still fading, but the twilight lingered. It was still early, and the night comes on late in the north of England. One could distinguish objects clearly at the distance of two fields' breadth. But Honor had no eyes now for her favorite sights, no ears for the two or three lonely birds that twittered on the ground near her. Her perch was airy, and the rude March wind was blowing, but she was well wrapped up, and did not heed the chill and bluster.

The question that possessed her young soul to the exclusion of all other thoughts, was the simple, but all-important one—what should she do?

She was as proud and spirited as she was tender and sweet. She was as resolute as she was warm-hearted and high-souled. After the revelation she had received of Mrs. Glint's real character and sentiments toward herself, she had no desire to remain at the Red House, were her stay likely to be permitted.

"I would rather beg my bread from door to door," she said to herself, "than to live longer under the same roof with that odious woman! And yet, is she not partly right? I have cost papa large sums of money—dear, generous papa—and ought I not now to maintain myself? I can no longer live at the Red House with Mrs. Glint, and I cannot put papa to the expense of maintaining me elsewhere. While I am here, I am a bone of contention. Papa will have to side with me or with Mrs. Glint, and in either case there will be much misery to him and to me. I want to do what is right. What is right?"

She looked up at the gray sky as if seeking there an answer.

She had been well named. She was the soul of honor; with a refined and exalted sense of right. She calmed her turbulent soul, and thought the matter over in all its bearings. She loved Captain Glint even more tenderly than if he had been her own father, and she revered him, and desired in all things his happiness above her own. He was satisfied with his wife, who had been able to keep from him a knowledge of the perversion of her moral nature, and Honor shrank from creating dissension between husband and wife. She knew him so well that she did not doubt he would expel his wife and her offspring from the Red House before he would allow Mrs. Glint to expel her. She knew also that Capt. Glint would not permit her to earn her own living, were she to ask his consent.

"It seems to me," she said at last, "that I ought to do nothing without papa's consent. But then if I remain at some inn until he comes back, people will gossip, and he will hardly like that. I cannot stay at home. I must go back to my Southport school, and my old teachers will advise me. But it will come to this at last: I must become a governess. I have been too long a dependent upon dear papa. It is time I went to work for myself."

The girl's face grew calm, and the dusky eyes glowed with high resolve. She saw her way now clearly, but it was to a life of self-abnegation and toil, very difficult for one so young and delicately nurtured, but she was ready to walk in it. She looked up at the sky, and sat absorbed in a trance-like silence, so forgetful of her surroundings that she did not heed nor hear the quick, light tread of a man who was approaching across the field behind her.

He came nearer, recognizing the slim figure from afar off, and quickening his speed as he approached her.

This man was Darrel Moer.

He had changed little in appearance since his first introduction to the reader, upon that night, eighteen years before, when Wallace Floyd had brought home the daughter of his father's enemy as his wife, and had been cast forth, with his father's curse. He had changed still less in heart since that memorable period when he had treacherously counselled young Floyd to marry Janet Arlyn, promising him that he would soften the Squire's wrath. He had instead fanned its flame, and ingratiated himself with the Squire at young Floyd's expense.

He was now some eight and thirty years of age, and looked ten years younger. His hair was black and glossy; he wore a curling beard; and his Italian eyes were soft and velvety in their expression. He was very handsome, and possessed an air of elegance that sat well upon him. He was a drawing-room favorite, and it was singular that he had not yet married. Lord Waldemar had expressed the opinion that Darrel Moer was waiting to come into the Waldemar title, when he could make a better match. Be that as it may, Moer was as susceptible as fickle, and had had a score of loves during the past eighteen years, but none of these loves had been strong enough to urge him into marriage. He was wont to compare himself to the butterfly that flits from flower to flower, and he often said he intended to marry at some future day, but he had not yet made his choice.

For three months Darrel Moer had been staying for the larger share of the time with a bachelor friend, the owner of Lynshire Place, a country seat in the neighborhood. He was thoroughly infatuated with Honor Glint, and his love for her struggled with his ambition to ally himself with rank and wealth.

He gained the stile unheard by the young girl, but when he placed his foot upon the lowest step of the ladder, Honor started and turned her head. She recognized him, and bowed coldly, making a movement to arise.

"Don't get up, I entreat, Miss Glint," said Moer deprecatingly. "I beg pardon for my intrusion, but I saw you from the road yonder, and ventured to approach you. If you rise, I shall go at once."

Regardless of this threatening, Honor arose quietly and descended to the ground.

"You will excuse me, Mr. Moer," she said gracefully, "but I have already stayed late. Papa does not like me to be out after dusk."

"Your papa whom you quote so often, and whose slightest wishes are your law, must be a wonderful man," said Darrel Moer, smiling. "I am unhappy not to have met him. You told me, I believe—ah, no, it was Mrs. Glint who told me—that the Captain is not your own father. You might belong to the blood royal, Miss Glint—you have that half-haughty, half-gracious and wholly charming air seen in those born to an elevated position."

Honor did not reply save by a smile, and moved slowly away from the stile. Darrel Moer walked beside her, keeping pace with her. Something in the calm sweetness of her pure, high-bred face impressed him. Her rare loveliness had never seemed to him so splendid and alluring. His soul thrilled with a passionate love for her, such as he had never felt for any other woman.

"How beautiful you are!" he said involuntarily. "Your black eyes set in your fair, pale face, and your pale golden hair, form a singular and striking contrast which I have seldom seen. By the way, the conjunction of black eyes and yellow hair is a peculiarity of the Waldemar family. My cousin, Lord Waldemar's son, had hair and eyes like yours, and that is the reason, I dare say, why you remind me of him. But no face ever fully resembled yours, Honor. There is no being in all the world to be compared to you."

Honor shrank within herself a little and moved on more quickly. Her evident disrelish for his compliments only quickened the ardor of Darrel Moer's love for her.

"Honor," he said, in a quick, passionate voice, "hear me. I love you. I cannot live without you. Your voice is music in my ears; your face is glorious in my eyes. You are all I ask in life. My lot will be a brilliant one. There's not a grain of doubt that my cousin died years ago childless, and I shall be the next Lord Waldemar. My wife will be a lady of rank, with almost unlimited wealth at command, and her life may be one round of pleasure. But I know your aspirations, and that you will find your highest happiness in caring for the poor, founding schools and asylums, and doing good. I offer you the opportunity to carry out all these congenial schemes, and I will watch over you and love you always. Honor, will you be my wife?"

The girl's heart seemed almost to stand still at that moment. The warmth of Darrel Moer's declaration aroused her gratitude, but she did not love him. And, unknown as yet to herself, she did love another—that very Sir Hugh Tregaron, the young Cornish Baronet to whom Mrs. Glint had alluded.

"You do not speak," cried Darrel Moer. "You cannot intend to reject me? Oh, Honor, my very life depends upon you. Do not turn me away!"

They had crossed the fields by this time, and were at the gate opening into the paddock. The darkness had fallen. Lights gleamed from the uncurtained windows of the Red House, and the sound of the piano under Miss Milner's fingers came out to them in faint, discordant notes. Honor came to a halt, her hand upon the gate.

She remembered that she was soon to be driven forth from under the roof that had always sheltered her, and she dreaded the homelessness that threatened her. Darrel Moer was by no means the hero of her girlish dreams, but she liked him at least, and he promised her not only a safe refuge from impending sorrow, but the gratification of all her wishes. As his wife she might do much good, and she need not be herself unhappy.

"You are very kind, Mr. Moer," she said, her slender fingers tightening their hold upon the gate. "I appreciate your kindness to me, and I thank you. But I do not love you."

"That will come in time, I hope," said her suitor brightly. "I will win your love, if you will give me a right to try. I have stayed here for three months for love of you. I shall have to go to Yorkshire soon to visit my uncle. Become my wife before I go, Honor."

"Mrs. Glint says that I must leave the Red House within three days, Mr. Moer," said Honor unsteadily. "I ought to support myself instead of living a life of dependence. I am only a poor girl, without money, and almost without friends, since papa is not here. I am no fitting mate for you."

"Let me judge of that," said Darrel Moer tenderly. "I shall be proud to take you just as you are, for in so taking you I shall wed the most beautiful girl in the kingdom, and beauty like yours is a royal dowry. Honor, I will not let you go until you accept me as your future husband."

"You are too generous—I must think—it is all so sudden—"

"Yes; but you must have long known that I love you. Let us cheat Mrs. Glint of the malicious pleasure she expects to derive from your expulsion from the Red House. Become my wife to-morrow morning, Honor. I will get a special license, and we will be legally wedded before to-morrow noon."

"I—I cannot promise. It is so soon, Mr. Moer."

"We will keep it secret until I shall have visited my uncle and broken the news to him," said Darrel Moer, with a sudden apprehension of Lord Waldemar's wrath when his lordship should discover that his nephew had wedded a "nobody." "We will be married very quietly, and I will then go to my uncle with the news. May I get the license, Honor?"

"I cannot decide to-night that I will marry you, Mr. Moer," said Honor. "I will think over the matter, and let you know in the morning. Give me but these few hours grace."

"You shall have them," replied Moer gallantly. "Meet me at eleven o'clock to-morrow morning at the nearest corner of Ivy Lane. It's a lonely spot, but near to the church in which, if you accept me, we will be married. I will be at the spot with my valet. Bring your maid with you. We shall need the pair as witnesses, if you decide to marry me. I will have the license in my pocket, Honor. You see how strongly I count upon your acceptance of me."

"I will be there at the hour appointed," said Honor, "and will then give you my answer. But I cannot promise that it shall be an affirmative. But whether we become husband and wife or not, I trust that we shall remain friends. I must go now."

She opened the gate as she concluded. Darrel Moer caught up one of her hands and pressed it to his lips. Then he ardently pressed upon her his suit, imploring her to marry him, and telling her how he loved her.

Honor broke from him at last and said a grave good-night, and crossed the paddock alone in the gloom and went into the lighted door-way of the Red House; and Darrel Moer, standing where she had left him, looked after her and smiled as he pulled his long curling beard, and said to himself:

"Poor little girl! That cat of a Mrs. Glint means to drive her out to shift for herself, does she? She is between two fires, and I am sure to win her. She'll meet me at Ivy Lane to-morrow morning at eleven o'clock, her maid with her, and falter out a pretty Yes, and I'll take her to the church, and she will be transformed into Mrs. Darrel Moer, and I shall be a Benedict at last. I'll get the license as early as possible. I suppose I'm throwing myself away after a fashion—been through a whole forest to pick up a stick without foliage at last—but then, if she hasn't rank or wealth, she has beauty, and such beauty as does not shine upon one more than once in a lifetime. She'll star it during the season; she'll be the standing toast. How the fellows will envy me, and I shall have money enough for us both. The pressure is so strong upon her, she's bound to yield. She's as sure to be my wife to-morrow as the sun is sure to rise!"

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

A SEARCH FOR A SITUATION.

BY DOROTHY DALE.

Martie Woodbridge—her name was Martha, but no one ever called her so—lived on the outskirts of a small Connecticut village.

Her father was a farmer, but not a prosperous one. Nature with her frosts and droughts was always getting the upperhand of him, and the crops which he raised were sure to be those which brought the lowest price in the market. Last year his lucky neighbors made handsome profits from tobacco, while he had not a plant growing on his farm. This year he had acres of it, and it barely paid its own expenses. The cankerworm stripped his apple-trees, and a late frost blighted the corn and oats. He had the misfortune to buy a cow which introduced the cattle disease into his farm-yard, and Creamer, Spotty and Whiteface—the three cows that always filled their pails the fullest and made the most golden butter—sickened and died.

Everything seemed to be going from bad to worse. How then was the family to be supported, and Johnny to be kept in college?

This was the question which Martie puzzled over from day to day; coming at last to the conclusion that she must try her luck in the big world which she had seen so little of, outside of her own small village. She would go to New York, and if possible find there a situation as governess, in which she could at least provide for her own support.

Her mother let fall a few quiet tears over the plan, and smiling patiently through them, said, "Ask your father." Mr. Woodbridge said No, at first; but having lain awake all night over his difficulties, he called Martie to him, kissed her solemnly, gave a weary sigh, and with it his consent.

So it came to pass that on a cool, crisp October morning, when the woods were at their brightest autumn flush, and the frost had stiffened the grass into little silvery blades and spears, and made the few pale flowers that lingered by the road-side hang their heads, Martie put on her bravest smile, made hopeful, comforting little speeches, kissed them all good-bye at home—the dear old home, so full of joys and troubles—and started for New York, to put into that great hurrying, driving, jostling market the modest wares she had to offer.

Martie was eager, and full of hope; but, alas! how much eagerness and hopefulness go down to death every day, in the frantic rush and scrabble for the good things going. Martie in the great city, looking for work to do, seemed like a quiet little wren trying to pick up a worm or a crumb where hawks and vultures were snatching and clawing for plunder. We shall see how the little wren fared.

Martie was met the moment she stepped from the cars by an old friend of the family, who had kindly promised to receive her at her house, and do what she could to assist her. The next day, early in the morning, a modest, unpretending little advertisement was sent to one of the daily newspapers. What a stupendous affair it seemed to Martie, and how her unsophisticated little heart beat at the thought of it! Nothing could come of it that day, however, and while she goes out with Mrs. Allen to do a little shopping, and stare at a few of the city lions, let us take a look at the quarters she has fallen into.

Mrs. Allen kept a small private boarding-house, very select and very genteel. Its inmates were the learned Professor Bigwig and family, from whose presence a certain literary aroma was supposed to pervade the atmosphere; the brilliant Brig.-Gen. Boreas, hero—according to his own account—of numberless battles; a rising young lawyer, with his pretty blushing girl wife, all fresh and lovely in her new bridal toilet; a rich widow, and her still richer daughter, who, it was said, was soon to become the helpmate of the clerical member of the household, the Rev. Paul Apollos; and last, though not least, the representative of the fine arts, Mr. Raymond, an artist whose pictures had won golden praises from critics and connoisseurs, and golden prices from purchasers.

Mr. Raymond was Martie's left-hand neighbor at the table. With the first glance at his dark face, iron-gray hair and mustache, and deep set gray eyes, she felt rather inclined to be afraid of him. When he smiled, she liked him better, and thought the gray eyes looked kind; and as she felt very shy and lonesome among all these strange faces, she was glad to have him talk a little to her, and take care that she was provided with all she wanted.

On the second morning after her arrival in the city, Martie's advertisement appeared. Mrs. Allen sent a paper up to her room before she was out of bed, so that almost as soon as her eyes were open she began to hope, and to be afraid, and to wonder if, out of the many people who she supposed would come to see her, any one of them would think well enough of her to want her services.

Martie was very painstaking with her toilet that morning. She wanted to look her best. She spent twice the usual time over her wavy, gold-brown hair; and when she had put on her pretty gray dress—the gray dress was for mornings, and the black silk for afternoons—and fastened the dainty, spotless collar and cuffs, she dallied fully five minutes over her little stock of ribbons, trying this one and that, and went down at last to breakfast, looking, to Mr. Raymond's artist eyes, which took her in at a glance, like a wild rose just out of a thicket, with the dewy morning brightness brimming in her brown eyes, the pink of rose petals in her cheeks, and soft, warm, shimmering sunbeams woven into the ripples of her brown hair. How his artist fingers longed for canvas and colors, to give to his beloved St. Agnes that beautiful hair!

But the wild rose might as well have been blooming in her native thicket. In vain Martie peeped from front windows, and held her breath when the door bell rang. No one came to see the gray dress that morning.

The black silk fared better. It was called upon; and Martie went down to the parlor, with her heart in her mouth, to meet the grand lady whose handsome carriage and dashing horses she had watched as they drew up in spread-splendid style before the house. But, alas! Martie was not experienced, and Martie was too young, and, though Madam did not say so, Martie was too pretty, for there was a grown-up son in the family, and to set youth and beauty before him in the shape of a poor governess would be tempting Providence. Madam was very sorry, hoped this and that, and swept gracefully out to her carriage, while Martie mounted with a rather slow step to her little fourth-story room, to watch and wait, and wonder if everybody would find her too young. She was not to blame for it, any how, she said to herself, trying to coax a laugh.

No one else came that day, but the next morning there was an early call for "the young lady who advertised." Martie was glad she had on the gray dress; perhaps she looked older in it. But gray or black was all the same; she was again weighed in the balance and found wanting—not in years this time, but in German; and as one weary hour after another went by, and no other applicants appeared, Martie grew heavy-hearted. Her advertisement was to appear for three days. Two had already passed, resulting only in disappointment. Mrs. Allen tried to encourage her, but when night came, and the six o'clock dinner, Martie felt sad and homesick.

"I hope no one has made arrangements to carry you off just yet," Mr. Raymond said, as he took his seat beside her at their end of the long table.

"No," said Martie. "No one wants me. I'm too young, and I don't know German." And a big round tear rolled over into her tea-cup.

"There's no cause for discouragement in that, I assure you," said Mr. Raymond. "I know people who would not find fault with you on either score."

Then he went on talking to her in such a pleasant way that she soon became interested, forgot her troubles and the tear in her tea-cup, and was as merry as though she had been older and had known German.

Mr. Raymond staid down stairs until ten o'clock, read aloud an old-time fireside story, and kept the ball of conversation rolling in such pleasant channels that the evening was gone before Martie knew it, and in spite of all her disappointment it had somehow been the pleasantest one she had spent there.

The next morning a lady came to see Martie in behalf of her mother-in-law, who lived an hour's ride by steamboat up the Hudson; and Martie engaged to go on the following day to see the place and the people.

Ah, that delicious hour's journey up the river!—a river of enchantment, with the dreamy autumn haze brooding over it, and soft winds just ruffling its surface and floating up to Martie with a whisper and a caress.

On shore all the enchantment vanished. There was no poetry about Mrs. Myrick. She was pure, unadulterated prose; wanted her girls to have a good, strong eddication—no jimcracks, no furrin languages to jabber in. She was willing to pay good wages—would give a governess $200 a year and her board; but she mustn't expect much waitin' on. They didn't keep any hired help—didn't need any; a pity 'twould be if two hearty girls like hers couldn't do their own work.

Poor Martie! She would not say No at once, because this was, thus far, her only chance; so she promised to give an answer soon, and went back to the boat praying Heaven to send her something better.

She thought her prayer was answered when a gentleman called that evening, talked with her about his three little girls, and seemed well satisfied with the modest account she gave of herself. He was very particular about music, however, and would be glad to hear Miss Woodbridge play. Their interview had taken place in the kindly shelter of the quiet little reception room, but the piano was in the big parlor, and in there the Professor and the Rev. Paul Apollos were discussing earth and heaven. The Brigadier-General was stalking about, showing off his martial figure; and the young bride by the side of her new lord was holding court in the midst of a lively circle of callers.

Shy, bashful Martie; how could she play before all these people? Poor, timid little wren, that had just crept from under the motherwing and flown out of her nest! Could she show what sweet music she knew how to make with a crowd of listeners?

There were none of the airs and graces of the music-pounding young woman about Martie, as she dropped down upon the piano stool and took a moment's grace before entering upon the dreadful ordeal. 'Twas no use waiting; but oh, if the gentleman would but sit down! Why *will* he stand beside her and watch her poor frightened fingers as they trip and stumble, give a wild jump for a distant note and miss it, make a dive for one octave and light on another, and at last lose their way altogether, and go on chasing each other blindly up and down the key-board. Martie knows the piece she is trying to play as well as she knows her name, but it all flies out of her head and slips away from her fingers, and she ends at last with a finale of her own improvising, feeling the hair stand up straight on her head as she does it.

The gentleman was "much obliged," left almost immediately, and Martie, in a rage of grief and mortification, was rushing through the hall, exclaiming with a sob, as she covered her face with her hands, "What *shall* I do?" when she was suddenly stopped at the foot of the stairs by Mr. Raymond.

"My dear child," said he, "don't take it so to heart. I've heard you play that piece before, and thought how well you did it; but of course you couldn't play with all those people staring and listening. The man was a brute to make you do it."

"Oh, no; it is I who am such a simpleton," said Martie; "but you are very good to me;" and she hurried on up the stairs, longing to get where nobody could see her, but feeling comforted a little, even then, by the tender sympathy which had done its best to console her.

Once in her own room the flood-gates were opened, and Martie cried over what she called her disgraceful failure until she had succeeded in getting up a raging headache. Then she went to bed with the determination of writing in the morning to Mrs. Myrick, informing that lady that she was ready to accept her offer and enter upon the "eddication" of her daughters. But before she had time to carry her resolution into effect Mrs. Myrick herself appeared, having made up her mind that Martie wouldn't do for them. She hadn't been brought up in their ways, and was like to be too pertikler.

Thus vanished all hopes of success from advertising. Mrs. Allen next advised that Martie should try one of the Educational Agencies in the city, and an application was accordingly made. Then followed more days of anxious waiting and of hope deferred, resulting at last in a visit and a generous offer from a lady who won Martie's heart at the outset with her pleasant face and winning ways, and her gentle, motherly talk about the little boy and the two little girls at home for whom she wanted a teacher and companion. But, alas! that home lay hundreds and hundreds of miles away, on the far-off prairies of Iowa.

It seemed to Martie like going to the ends of the earth. She had twenty-four hours in which to decide, spent half of them in wavering between yes and no—between the courage to go and the homesickness that crept over her at the very thought of it. Then scolding herself for a genuine coward, she made up her mind that go she must, and go she would.

"Is the Western question settled?" Mr. Raymond asked, as they were leaving the dinner table that evening.

"Yes," Martie answered; "I am going."

"What!" exclaimed Mr. Raymond, in a tone of surprise. "Have you really made up your mind to go so far away from home and all your friends?"

"Yes, I *must* go," said Martie, with a little quiver in her voice. "Please don't say anything to discourage me."

"I wouldn't for the world," returned Mr. Raymond, "only that I know of a situation nearer home which you can have if you will accept it. Come into the reception room and I will tell you about it."

Martie was all eagerness now. How delightful if after all she should not be obliged to make an exile of herself!

"It is a companion, not a teacher, that is wanted," Mr. Raymond continued. "Would you be willing to take a situation as companion?"

Martie's face fell a little, but she answered: "I should be very glad to take such a situation if I could fill it. Do you think I could?"

"I'm sure you could."

"Do you know the person who wants a companion?"

"Yes."

"Who is it?"

"Myself."

"Yourself! How—what—" The exact question which Martie intended asking just here, must be left to the imagination, since she did not seem to be quite clear about it herself.

Mr. Raymond continued:

"Yes; it is I, Martie. I want you for my companion—my wife." The gray eyes twinkled as he asked, "Will you take the situation?"

An hour later Mrs. Allen entered the room, exclaiming, "Bless my soul!" as she stumbled upon an unmistakable pair of lovers.

"My dear Mrs. Allen," said Mr. Raymond, taking his blushing "companion" by the hand, and leading her to the astonished old lady, "I know you will be glad to hear that Martie will not now be able to make an engagement with the Western lady; she has already made one with me."

MARY'S MARRIAGE.

BY MRS. A. E. BARR.

Many years ago, I stayed a while in an old cathedral town in the richest and loveliest part of Yorkshire. Such quaint old houses, roofed with bright red tiles, such green meadows and yellow cornfields, such great overshadowing trees, and such sweet old-fashioned gardens, I shall never see again. But the great charm to my young fancy was the solemn old cathedral, and the cool, silent courts of houses that clustered round it. The dreamy, peaceful life enchanted me. I thought that I could live for ever among the dim aisles of the grand old church, and the shady gardens of the handsome houses.

"This is a court of peace," I said. "Surely no shadow of discontent or sorrow can ever come within it."

But this I said in my haste and my ignorance. At the end of the first week of my visit, as I was wandering in my friend's garden, which touched the graveyard of the cathedral, I heard the wildest, strangest, most sorrowful music coming from it. I knew the Vesper service was over. I knew this was not the organist's playing, and my interest and curiosity triumphed over my fear, and led me to take the keys of the vestry, which were at my command, and satisfy myself. No human cry of agony was ever more intelligible. I divined at once that some poor breaking heart was pouring out itself into the Divine ear, which understands all speech and language, and so I stole away again, ashamed and sorry for my intrusion.

Frequently, after this—sometimes early in the morning, sometimes deep in the gloaming—I heard the same musician. At last I spoke to the friend with whom I was staying. She looked troubled as she answered:

"It is the poor old Dean. I am glad he has this consolation. Do not disturb him."

A few days afterward, as we were walking up the court, we met the Dean. He begged my friend to go into his house and see his daughter Mary; and then I soon understood what mighty grief it was which had struck the key-note of his passionate, pleading prayer.

She was dying; no one but a parent could have doubted it for one minute. The earnest of Eternity was in her eyes, which looked as if they had seen some vision that had forever separated her from time. She lay upon a couch drawn close to the open window, looking into a garden thick with green shade, and bright with many a sweet flower whose name is now forgotten. I gazed on her with admiration. I do not think it ever entered my mind to pity her. I reserved that feeling for the gray misery of her father, and for the hopeless, resentful looking distress I saw in the face and manner of a handsome man whom I took to be her brother. There was, however, some element in the sorrow of that dying room that I did not understand then; though soon afterward, when I knew Mary Harlowe's history, it was clear enough to me.

She was the only child of her father, who had received her in exchange for his young wife's life. Among the silent rooms of the great house, and in the pleasant old gardens belonging to the church property, she had grown up to a sweet and lovely girlhood.

When about seventeen years of age, her cousin, Bernard Harlowe, was sent to her father's care, while he prepared for taking orders. The young man was not rich, and was never likely to have any inheritance but the handsome person, the clear head and the warm heart nature had given him. But Mary loved him almost from the first day of his arrival, and Bernard thought himself richer in that love than the bishop in his see, or the king in his crown.

The Dean was not so wrapped up in spiritual matters as to be oblivious of what was transpiring under his own roof, yet he made no remonstrance; so, though there was no positive engagement, Bernard and Mary Harlowe considered themselves as one heart and soul for time and for eternity.

One afternoon the sunny stillness of the court was broken by the gallopping of horses and the rattle of a carriage. It stopped at the Dean's door, and Bernard recognized a young Earl, famous for his wealth and church patronage, who owned a magnificent seat about three miles distant.

"There is some dispute between my Lord Bishop and the Earl," he said to Mary. "I wonder how the Dean will manage between them?"

But the Earl's visit seemed to them a matter of the very smallest importance. Wandering under the trees, pulling ripe berries, or idly gathering some flower fairer than all its mates, they did not even speculate on the length of his visit or watch for his departure; it was therefore with some surprise they saw him and the Dean come slowly walking down the main avenue together.

Mary would have escaped the interview by taking a private walk to the house, but Bernard, with some strange instinct of being on the defensive, drew her arm through his and waited their approach. The Dean seemed annoyed at the attitude. He introduced his daughter and nephew, and then bid Mary "go and prepare for dinner, which the Earl Grey," he added, bowing, "will do me the honor to eat with me."

The young nobleman languidly assented, following Mary with his eyes until she was hidden from view by the shrubbery. Surely "loving and hating come by nature," for ere the Earl had spoken, Bernard hated him; and long before the night was over, he fancied he had good cause to do so.

He was angry at Mary for looking so beautiful; he was angry at the Earl for looking at her beauty. He thought his uncle disgustingly subservient to the young man's rank; he thought Mary unusually cool to him. All night long he was his own tormentor, and this was but the beginning of sorrows.

The Earl, charmed with Mary's fresh young beauty, so different to the clever, intriguing women with whom he had danced and trifled away all the last season, fancied himself deeply in love with the simple, innocent girl. He came again and again, at first inventing all sorts of excuses, finally without any excuse at all.

It required, indeed, small persuasion to obtain the Dean's full permission to woo his daughter. Then stormy scenes ensued; uncle and nephew came to bitterest strife, while Mary's defence of Bernard only brought on her such anger from her father as filled her with grief and fear.

Poor Bernard! The end his heart had prophesied came soon enough. In the presence of the Dean there was a cruel, formal parting; under the silent stars, amid the thick shrubbery of the garden, there was another parting. Then two young hearts said the words which doomed one to an empty life, and the other to a splendid tomb.

Mary would have promised constancy, but Bernard would not let her do it.

"You shall never have to reproach yourself with broken promises for my sake, darling," he said. "What could you, you poor timid little dove, do between your father and that authoritative Earl? But whatever they make you do, remember, Mary, I shall never blame you, and I will love you until my last conscious breath."

Then he kissed her pale face over and over, tenderly, clingingly, as we kiss the dead, and left her. And Mary, almost heart-broken with grief, and faint with terror lest she should be discovered, could only wave her hands in mute farewell, for she knew now that love and her must walk apart forever.

Bernard went to Oxford, and Mary became Countess Grey, and went whithersoever it pleased her husband to take her. She was naturally affectionate, and would doubtless have become a loving and gentle wife, if she had received any encouragement. But she soon outlived the Earl's short liking, and then he only seemed to find pleasure in those petty cruelties which unloving husbands above all others understand.

One of these was to affect the most unbounded chagrin at the sex of her first child, to sneer at all daughters, and to send it from its mother's breast to the care of a strange nurse. Another was to pretend she needed exercise and change of air, and remove her from London to the Continent before she was able to bear the fatigue. He gave her no rest until she reached Rome, and here she became so seriously ill that even her servants remonstrated against the cruelty of moving her further.

In Rome she remained six months, nearly alone. The Earl travelled hither and thither as his fancy led him, making his wife only occasional short visits, of a cruelly ceremonious character. His life of extravagant dissipation was a shameful contrast to the loneliness and absolute seclusion which her Italian physician ordered, while her separation from all who loved or cared for her, and her longing for her native land and home, told fearfully upon her failing health.

But one day a far more cruel sorrow faced her. A letter without signature was placed in her hands, not only accusing her husband of the most flagrant disregard for her, but also intimating that her physician was in the employ of her enemies, and not a safe person to be intrusted with her life.

She had long felt sure that she was dying, but the dread of dying away from her child, her father and her home, overcame all other fears. This terror made her prudent; she arranged for an immediate return home, and took advantage of her husband's first absence to commence it.

For him she left a most noble and pathetic letter, entreating him not to follow her, forgiving all his positive and negative cruelties, and asking only to be permitted to die beside her father and their child.

Her requests so completely agreed with the Earl's desires, that for once he did not thwart her; and so, two years after this ill-starred marriage, Earl Grey's travelling carriage again broke the silence of the peaceful cathedral court. The Dean's daughter had come back to him wearing something higher than a Countess' coronet; she had received the signet of immortality, and been anointed for a heavenly coronation.

After Mary's marriage the Dean had gone to see his nephew, and easily induced him to come back with him; so it was Bernard that lifted Mary from her carriage and carried her in his strong arms to the room she never left again; and it was Bernard that rode day and night, so that he might bring a few hours earlier the child which was to comfort Mary's dying hours.

In order to excuse the step she had taken, and procure her father's promise to keep her little daughter, she had been compelled to divulge all the cruel martyrdom of her married life. After this revelation it was not hard to understand the Dean's wretched look, and his passionate, pleading prayers, and the music which was an articulate agony. I could understand too, now, the angry, longing look on Bernard's face, and his miserable restlessness; but neither of the men showed, in Mary's presence, any feeling which could mar the peace of her descent into the grave.

I went often to see her the next few months. It was like lying with her at "the Gate Beautiful" of Heaven. I used to wonder at her loveliness, and rejoice in her sure and certain hope, but I never pitied her. As I said before, I kept that feeling for the hopeless grief of the old man, and the bitter sorrow of the young one.

Just before Christmas I went over to the Dean's, after an absence of three days. Despair and remorse were sitting in the handsome chambers, and a slow but certain sorrow creeping up the marble stairs. The next day a narrow coffin had separated father and daughter, mother and child, husband and wife, lover and beloved, as effectually and as widely as all the starry spaces.

No one can step in between two loving hearts without guilt; and when love is slain for gold or rank, it has bitter avengers.

Neither, I think, should

"Love stoop to love, like prince to lord;"

but, rather, love should meet love upon an *equal* marriage plain,

"And kiss like crowned kings."

ARISE, MY LOVE!

Arise, my love!—my Ladye bright!
  The merrie lark is up!
The sun hath kissed, with lip of light,
  The daisy's silver cup.

The dappled doe is out at play
  Upon the grassy hill—
The cushat weaves a tender lay
  Beside her favorite rill.

All pretty things are moving now,
  Like dreams, in azure light,
Yet none are half so fair as *Thou!*—
  Arise—my Ladye bright!

A COOL ROBBER.

Policeman Badger, of the Tenth station, had a bit of experience the other night which he is not fond of talking about. It was past midnight as he was leisurely pushing his beat through Jessup street, and as he came opposite to Drayton & Fogg's jewelry store he observed gleams of a light through the chinks of the shutters, and he rapped at the door.

"Is that you, policeman?" asked a voice within.

"Yes," answered Badger.

"Well,—it's only me.—It's all right. Kind o' chilly out, isn't it?"

"Yes."

"Thought so. I was just fixing the fire.—Good-night."

Badger said "good-night," and pursued his way.

An hour afterward Badger passed through Jessup street again, and again he saw the light in the jewelry store. It didn't look right, and he banged at the door loudly.

"Halloo!" cried the voice within. "Is it you, policeman?"

"Yes."

"All right. Won't you come in and warm you? It won't hurt anything for you to slip from your beat a few minutes."

The door was opened, and Policeman Badger entered, and he found the inmate to be a very gentlemanly looking man, in a linen duster.

"Come right up to the stove, policeman. Excuse me a moment."

The man took the ash-pan from the bottom of the stove, and carried it down cellar and emptied it, and when he had returned and wiped his hands, he said, with a smile,—

"Chilly night, isn't it?"

"Yes."

"Chilly outside, and dull inside. (Another smile.) New goods for the spring trade, and have to keep our eyes open. Lonesome work, this watching all night; but I manage to find a bit of comfort in *this*. Won't you join me in a tip? You'll find it the pure thing."

And the man in the duster produced a black bottle and a tumbler.

Policeman Badger partook, and having wiped his lips, and given his fingers a new warming, he left the store and resumed his beat, satisfied that all was right in at Drayton & Fogg's.

But the morning brought a new revealment. Drayton & Fogg's store had been robbed, during the night, of six thousand dollars' worth of watches and jewelry; and though Policeman Badger carries in his mind an exact daguerreotype of the robber, the adroit rascal has not yet been found. C.

STAND FIRM!

BY CALEB DUNN.

Through the changing scenes of life,
Stand firm!
He is brave who, 'mid the strife,
Shows a heart and shows a will
Ready e'er to conquer ill—
Stand firm!

What though storms surround your way,
Stand firm!
'Yond the night shall come the day,
'Yond the gale shall come the calm,
With its blessings and its balm—
Stand firm!

What though foes may gather near,
Stand firm!
Truest courage knows no fear,
But with all its will and might
Battles ever for the right—
Stand firm!

Let no scoffer baffle you—
Stand firm!
Dare to think and dare to do,
Dare to stand where men have stood,
Ever working for the good—
Stand firm!

Those who bear the heaviest load—
Stand firm!—
O'er the weariest, roughest road,
Often are the first to gain
Fortune's sunny-skied domain—
Stand firm!

Keep, then, ever on your way—
Stand firm!
Never from the straight path stray,
And you'll reach the goal where lies
Honor's crown and fortune's prize—
Stand firm!

THE RIVAL SISTERS.

By ELIZA A. DUPUY,

AUTHOR OF THE "EVIL GENIUS," THE "WHITE TERROR," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XVII.

HESTER'S NEW COMPANION.

"We are at Seaview," said Spencer, opening the door, and springing out of the carriage. "You will have a tender welcome, Estelle, for my grandmother is one of the gentlest and most sympathizing of women. There she is now, coming down the walk to receive you."

Hester alighted, and looked searchingly at the small, shrunken figure that was approaching her, though she held her vail down, that her companion might not see the expression of her face.

Mrs. Spencer was nearly seventy years of age, but she still moved about with a light and active tread. She was very thin and very pale, but her dark eyes were vivacious as ever, and her face had all the beauty of serene old-age. Her hair, white as silver, was folded back beneath a close tulle cap, trimmed with bands of narrow white satin ribbon; a gray silk robe, with collar and cuffs of fine cambric, completed her outward adornment, and every article she wore seemed to have a peculiar fitness to their owner.

Hester noted all this, as she advanced upon the shaded walk to meet her hostess, and for a moment she felt abased before this pure and good woman, who had passed through her long life without a stain. But the feeling passed away as she thought:

"She was never tempted to evil; she has been hedged in and guarded by love, fortune, friends, throughout her whole life, and she would have no right to sit up in judgment on me, even if she knew all."

The two met, and Mrs. Spencer embraced her guest, and in gentle tones, said:

"My poor darling, how you must have suffered! To think that you were alone among strangers when this terrible bereavement fell upon you! If I had known—if I had dreamed of your actual position, old and infirm as I am, I would have gone to you myself. But the doctor's letter did not prepare me for what has since happened."

Hester bowed her head upon the shoulder of her new friend, and seemed to be deeply moved. She presently withdrew herself from the tender arm that encircled her, and with apparent effort, said:

"I was anticipating a happy visit to you, Mrs. Spencer, but in place of coming in joy, I bring only sorrow to your pleasant home. You will bear with me for the few days I can remain, and pardon the depression from which I shall long find it difficult to rally. I have lost the best of fathers in a terrible manner, and grief must have its way, though I promise you that mine shall be as little demonstrative as possible."

The old lady drew her toward the house, as she said, in sympathetic tones:

"You are welcome to me in grief or in joy, Estelle. I knew and loved your mother very dearly, and for her sake, as well as for that of Raymond, I take you to my heart of hearts. Come in, dear, and make yourself entirely at home. I feel for you more than I can express, but I will not add to your natural grief by attempting injudicious consolation. 'The heart knoweth its own bitterness,' and those who have suffered themselves know how worse than idle are words, which often irritate the wounds they are intended to heal."

They entered a portico covered with trailing vines, and from that passed into a vestibule paved with blocks of colored woods. On each side of this was a suit of three rooms opening from each other, and into the front one on the left hand Mrs. Spencer conducted her guest.

It was a bedroom, fitted up with simple elegance, and the old lady took off Hester's bonnet and shawl, and kissing her tenderly, said:

"You will find everything you need here, my dear, to renovate your toilet. I will go now and have breakfast served at once, for you look as if a cup of strong coffee will do you good. I don't wonder though that your face is pale, and your eyes weary, after all you have lately gone through."

"It was indeed a dreadful ordeal," sighed Hester. "I shall be ready, dear Mrs. Spencer, in a few moments. I must not venture to remove this disfiguring bandage from my head quite yet, though I think I might safely do so. Dr. Macon was so stringent in his commands, that I am afraid to disobey them."

"Do not risk anything on our account, my love. We shall not be likely to criticise your appearance at such a crisis as this. Don't call me Mrs. Spencer, Estelle; the betrothed bride of my favorite grandson has the right to claim me as a kinswoman, and I wish you to do so from this first hour of our meeting."

"How good you are; how very good!" murmured the girl, taking the thin white hand of the old lady in her own and carrying it to her lips. "Dearest Ray has often spoken of his grandmother to me, and now you are to be mine too. Thank you for according to me the privilege of addressing you by so sacred a name. A mother's love I have not known, but that you offer me is almost as sweet and holy."

"It is your's to claim, my dear child;" and again the speaker kissed the false lips which knew so well how to express tender thoughts and noble feeling, without experiencing one emotion of either.

Mrs. Spencer left the room, and Hester hastened to remove from her person the dust of travel, and to arrange her hair as well as was possible under the filament of linen that concealed the greater portion of it. The fatigue of the past night had rendered her pallid enough to enable her to sustain her character as an invalid, and as she glanced in the mirror, she thought:

"I look exactly as Estelle Landry did as she lay upon her pillows, and with ordinary tact, I can escape every breath of suspicion. Eureka! the game is almost won! But for that odious Macon, I should say that it is quite sure."

There was a slight tap upon the door, and the look of exultation vanished from her face, to be succeeded by one of tender melancholy.

Mrs. Spencer returned herself to conduct the guest she wished to honor to the breakfast room. This was on the opposite side of the house, and they crossed two handsomely furnished parlors to get to it.

In the third room in the suit, a table was laid near a wide window, mantled with honeysuckle and wisteria; a small portico also opened from this apartment, and a stately oak-tree cast its ample shadow over the greensward below.

A fresh looking young girl, neatly dressed, was in attendance on the table, and Hester looked around for Spencer. He was standing under the shadow of the tree, speaking earnestly with a lady in deep mourning, with a widow's cap, covering but not concealing the braids of brown glistening hair that were coiled around her small well-poised head.

Mrs. Spencer said to Hester:

"I have a young friend staying a few days with me, to whom I am much attached. In fact, I sent for Marion Oliver to help me to brighten you up, for young people understand each other better than those of different ages do. She has suffered herself, poor child, and she knows how and when to express her sympathy. I hope you will take to each other, Estelle, and so does somebody else who is even more interested in Marion than I am."

Hester smiled faintly.

"I have heard of Mrs. Oliver from Herbert, and I already feel the deepest interest in her. I am glad she is here, as I wish especially to make her acquaintance."

As she ceased speaking the two lovers came in, and Esther saw in her future companion a slender, fair woman, with regular features, large blue, earnest eyes, shaded by long lashes, and a mouth which expressed patience, sweetness and more strength than might have been expected, when one remembered how Mrs. Oliver had suffered herself to be dragged into a union with one man, while her whole heart was devoted to another.

With perfect grace and self-possession Mrs. Oliver moved forward, took the hand Hester extended to her, and in a clear, well-modulated voice, said:

"Herbert has just been telling me that we are to be the best of friends in the time to come, my dear Miss Landry, and I hasten, in the first moment of meeting, to ratify the compact he has made for me. I cannot tell you how happy I am in the prospect of being useful to you in your loneliness and desolation."

"You will indeed be a treasure to me, Mrs. Oliver, if you will consent to go with me on the voyage I must immediately undertake," replied Hester, though she was at the moment thinking:

"This woman is not of my sort; she will shrink from wrong-doing, and will even make a martyr of herself, if necessary, sooner than soil the pure tablet of her soul with evil. Truth beams from her eyes, graciousness dwells on her lips, and I do not marvel that Herbert loves her to that degree that he has forgiven even the deadly wrong she did him. There can be no real intimacy between us, for I must ever be on my guard against her; but what difference need that make? I am not weak enough to wish to share my perilous secret with a confidant, and Mrs. Oliver will answer my turn for the few months we shall dwell together, as well as any other."

Mrs. Spencer caught Hester's last words, and when they were seated around the table she turned to her, and asked:

"What is this about an immediate voyage, Estelle? I hope you are not thinking seriously of going South so early in the season. You must remain with me a month at least, and then you should make a visit to your aunt before going back to Louisiana."

"Thank you, dear grandma, but I have promised the dead, and I must redeem my pledges. I will write to my aunt and explain the necessity that takes me away. Herbert will tell you that I must go on the first steamer that leaves for New Orleans. I have told him what I have to do, and he has consented to accompany me himself; and he has also promised to use his influence to obtain me a companion for my voyage, in the person of Mrs. Oliver. How fortunate I shall esteem myself if she will go with me, I cannot express."

"The good fortune will be mine," said Mrs. Oliver, with a slight inclination of her graceful head. "The climate here does not suit me, and I dreaded spending another winter so far north. I am most thankful to Herbert that he thought of me when he ascertained your wish to engage a lady to reside with you as your companion."

"It would have been a wonderful piece of self-abnegation if I had not," said Spencer, with a laugh. "You have not yet heard that I too am about to transfer myself permanently to the sunny South, and I naturally wish to have as many of my old friends near me as possible."

Mrs. Oliver's cheeks flushed, and her eyes grew suddenly bright, as she exclaimed:

"You—*you* going to Louisiana to live! This is the first I have heard of it, and—and—really, Herbert, I think you ought to have told me, before you obtained my promise to accompany Miss Landry."

She tried to look reproachfully at him, but when their eyes met, hers suddenly fell, and a smile she could not repress rippled over the sensitive mouth.

In a low voice Spencer said:

"I reserved that for the crowning joy, *ma belle*. If I had not been going there myself, I should scarcely have made such efforts as must remove you so far away. It will be charming to have two lady friends near enough to New Orleans to enable me to visit them whenever I can spare a few days from business."

The last words were spoken loud enough to be heard by the others, and Mrs. Spencer said:

"It is really settled then that you are to go, Herbert? I was not aware that anything certain was known. When did you hear that your negotiations had been successful?"

"I came out last Monday, ma'am, to tell you that the final arrangements had been made, and I was to become junior partner in the house of Snell & Co., but I found you in such a state of uneasiness concerning this dear girl here, that I forgot all about myself and my own affairs. I went on a pilgrimage to her assistance, and since I came back, this is the first opportunity I have had to announce my good fortune."

"Accept my congratulations, my dear boy; although I shall miss you sadly, I cannot do otherwise than rejoice in the bright prospect opening before you. The firm you are to enter is a sound one, and it was most generous in Ray to enable you to become a partner."

"Raymond is a noble fellow, and he never does things by halves; he has been a better friend to me than I have found in my own brother, and I am grateful accordingly."

With a half-withdrawn glance at Mrs. Oliver, the old lady said:

"You must not be too hard on Lionel. If you had been more willing to adopt his views, he would have helped you forward in every way he could."

"I dare say, ma'am, that Lion and I could have got on together if I had been ready to play the pickall to him, and act as if I had no will of my own in any of the affairs of life. He is my brother, and he is a rich man since he married Annis Stokes and her two hundred thousand; but I would not exchange places with him for twice her fortune. I mean to build up my own future, and marry my own wife, unless somebody steals her from me again."

He glanced significantly at Marion as he spoke the last words, and she flushed crimson and affected to be busily engaged with her breakfast.

Hester ate sparingly of the viands placed before her, and after breakfast was over, Mrs. Spencer led her back to her own room, and kindly said:

"You need sleep more than anything else, my love, and I insist that you shall lie down till noon at least. It is a marvel to me how you had strength to come on this journey at all, so soon after the anguish of mind and body you have gone through."

"Ah, yes, I have suffered much!" sighed the accomplished hypocrite, "but I felt that I must not yield to my own weakness, either of mind or body. I felt that I *must* make the effort to get away from that dreadful place in which my poor father died, but I admit that I feel quite overcome with weariness, and I shall be glad to have this day entirely to myself. By to-morrow I shall have regained command of myself, and I will not make too severe a demand on the sympathies of my friends. I will then try to prove to you that your grandson's choice has not fallen on a cold or ungrateful person."

"My dear child, I already know that a sweeter or purer nature is not to be found than that of Estelle Landry. I have read portions of your letters to Raymond, and I have a fancy that character can be read in every line of familiar correspondence; so you see I knew you quite well before we met. No one shall disturb you till noon, when I will send you a cup of tea by Martha. Sleep now, my dear love, and regain your roses."

The old lady took the snowy pillows from the bed, and arranged them comfortably on a wide chintz-covered sofa. On this she made her cherished guest lie down, and then drew in the window-blinds and arranged the curtains so as to darken the room without excluding the summer air.

Hester accepted these attentions with a faint curl on her lip, but when her hostess again turned toward her, she sweetly thanked her, and declared her intention to obey her literally, as far as was possible.

When Mrs. Spencer left the room and softly closed the door, she muttered:

"I wonder what that good woman would say or do, if the faintest suspicion of the truth were to dawn on her mind? But why should I ask myself *that* question? In place of caresses and soft words, I should be sent to prison, possibly with manacles on my wrists. Well, they would be necessary in that contingency, for I should do grievous harm to myself or to somebody else, unless I were prevented by force. I have weighed all those chances against wealth and Raymond, and I have accepted the risks. So far, all is well; but this Marion Oliver may prove a thorn in my side, unless I carefully guard myself against her. I wish I had seen her before I agreed to Herbert's proposal. But if I had, how could I have refused a favor on which it is plain his heart was set? How deeply the man is infatuated with that fair, cool creature, to be sure!"

The thoughts, interesting as they were to herself, insensibly lapsed into sleep, for she was greatly fatigued, and hours sped away while her senses were bound in this trance of forgetfulness.

The door of the room was softly unclosed more than once, but Hester still slept on, and the house was kept quiet, that her repose might remain unbroken.

CHAPTER XVIII.

MARION OLIVER'S SUSPICIONS.

When Hester left the breakfast room with Mrs. Spencer, Herbert drew Mrs. Oliver out beneath the shadow of the old oak-tree, and smilingly asked:

"Have I sinned beyond forgiveness, in concealing from you that I too am bound to the South, till you had accepted the situation I was so anxious to secure for you?"

"Oh, Herbert, you know well enough how glad I am that you will be near me; but what will Mrs. De Lorme say? What will she not try to make me do, when—when she finds out that—that we are constantly seeing each other?"

"That is 'a lame and impotent conclusion,' *ma belle*. Why don't you put it stronger? When my aunt finds that, in spite of all her efforts to separate us, we have a good understanding with each other still, I dare say she will gnash her teeth a little; but we sha'n't care for that, Marion. I'll tell you one thing, though—if you allow Aunt Carrie to influence you to do a single thing without consulting *me*, our friendship will come to an end. I am not going to be victimized by her again; nor shall you either, if I can prevent it."

"I *was* a victim," said Marion in a low voice, "but the blame did not lie entirely with Mrs. De Lorme. It is true that she made me feel how unsuitable would be a marriage between us, but it was wrong and unprincipled in me to marry poor Tom, because I wanted to show you that if you really wished to be free, I could find some one else to take care of me. I am afraid I thought of his money too, but I was punished for that."

"As all sinners are, even in this world. Well, we have agreed to talk no more about that, and you have this morning promised to wait for me till I can offer you a home that is fit for you to live in. It shall not be longer than I can help, my pretty Marion, but in the mean time I insist that this ugly piece of dry goods shall be consigned to the flames." And he twitched her widow's cap away from her glossy tresses, and placed in them a spray of late roses he had gathered that morning and left on the bench beneath the tree.

"You are queen of my affections, and as such, I have a second time crowned you. Take heed that you do not play me false again, my pretty one, for I can't go on forgiving forever, foolishly as I love you."

"Generously as you love me, rather say," she earnestly replied, as she raised her eyes to his face with a sweet expression of trust and confidence in them. "I have never loved any but you, Herbert, though, shame to me, I have been the wife of another man. I am almost glad now that Tom treated me badly; I deserved it at his hands, and I only met the punishment I prepared for myself. But, oh, Herbert! you can never know how wretched I was when I found that I had promised love and obedience to a man for whom I could soon feel only contempt and loathing. I respected him when I married him, and I thought that I could learn to tolerate him and try to make him happy. But he found some of your letters hidden where I thought they would be safe. I meant to destroy them some day, but I could not do it just then. It was weak, but I—I could not bear to part from them. Tom found them, as I said, and I thought he would have gone frantic with passion. From that day he treated me as if I had been his slave, and I bore with him because I knew how bitterly I had wronged him."

Tears were in her eyes, and Spencer tenderly said:

"You have made your confession, my dearest, and received absolution. From this day let us never refer to Tom Oliver. His very name is odious to me, and the sooner you can lay it aside the better I shall be pleased. Before the winter is over you shall be Mrs. Spencer; I have made up my mind to that."

"But I have engaged to live with Miss Landry till her own marriage takes place, and Raymond may not return for a year yet."

"My cousin will be at home before Christmas. I wish I was as sure of some other things as I am of that. He will not lose a moment in coming back when he hears of Mr. Landry's death. He will insist on an immediate marriage, and I really cannot see any reason why you and I shall not be united at the same time."

"We can arrange about that when Raymond is actually among us. Of course I shall not oppose any reasonable wish of yours, and I know that we shall be far happier together than apart."

"I should think so, indeed. And now, Marion, I think you may put aside those sombre weeds. You know what the poet says of bearing about 'the mockery of woe,' and it will be pleasant to me to see you in the soft, bright colors that used to become you so much."

"But I haven't anything to wear that is fit to put on except black dresses: and what will people say if I appear in colors immediately after laying aside deep mourning? Taking off my cap will set them to talking enough, I think."

"Who cares about what they say? Mrs. Grundy may clamor as she pleases, but I insist that you shall wear flowers in your hair to-day, a bright ribbon at your throat, and that to-morrow you shall go shopping, and get you a new outfit. I suppose I can put up with the black dress, as you have nothing else made up; but you can get plenty before we go away."

"What a tyrant you are, to be sure," she said, with a little pout. "I shall have very little time to prepare anything, if Miss Landry leaves as soon as she talks of."

"She can't go for a week yet, and in that time you can do wonders if you try. By the way, how do you like my fair cousin that is to be?"

Mrs. Oliver hesitated a moment, and then said:

"To tell you the truth, I was not as much prepossessed with her as I expected to be; after all Raymond's rhapsodies about her, I expected that her manner would be—well, I hardly know what—but something different. Do you know, I think she intends to patronize both you and me."

Spencer flushed slightly, and looked annoyed, but he replied with a smile:

"How quick you women are to misjudge each other. I think Estelle is charming, and so will you when you are better acquainted. She is under a cloud now, but when her health and spirits are restored I am sure you will find her a most agreeable companion."

"I hope so; for if she proves uncongenial, I shall have nothing to reconcile me to plantation life, except your occasional visits. We must be very quiet, you know, on account of Mr. Landry's recent death, and we shall be thrown pretty much on each other for companionship; but—I hardly know whether to say it to you after that last speech of yours, but I won't be a coward—first impressions with me go a great way, and there is something about Miss Landry that does not altogether please me. I can't define my feelings unless I use the clairvoyant's jargon, and say that our atmospheres are antagonistic."

"What rubbish you are talking, Marion, dear; I really thought you more sensible than to place faith in any such nonsense as that."

"I am sensible—of a feeling of repulsion toward this new friend of yours. As I sat opposite to her this morning at the table, I felt a singular conviction stealing over me that our intimate association will not be for the ultimate good of one of us; but which it is to be, my inward monitor does not warn me."

She spoke so gravely that Spencer regarded her with astonishment, and then burst into a merry laugh.

"Have you been stultifying your mind with German mysticism, Marion? I can think of nothing else, to account for the absurd things you have just said. My dearest, I wish you to remain

"'A creature not too bright or good
For human nature's daily food.'

So pray let such studies alone, especially if they lead you to form harsh judgments of those with whom you are intimately thrown. This poor girl stands so much in need of tenderness and consideration, that I am sorry to find you shrinking away from her on account of some fantastic crotchet that seems to have taken possession of your usually clear brain."

Marion flushed slightly; her gentle composure was a little ruffled, but she quietly said:

"I have accepted the position of Miss Landry's companion, and I intend to be a friend to her in the best sense of the word, if she will allow me to be one. But hers is not the clear nature that all I have heard spoken of her led me to believe her to possess. She gave me the impression of a person who is on guard all the time; yet she was among friends on whom she has been taught to rely. I may misjudge her, Herbert, but I do not think so. She is a study, but I shall find her out before we have been many months under the same roof."

"I think you will, and make the amende honorable for what you have just said of her. Estelle has been very frank with me, and some things she has told me lead me to place her in a higher niche than most women are entitled to. I cannot betray her confidence on one subject; but if I could, you would estimate her as I do. You must make allowances for the strangeness of her position this morning, and also for sickness, both of mind and body."

Before Mrs. Oliver could reply, Mrs. Spencer came out and joined them. She glanced at the discarded cap which lay on the grass at Marion's feet, and then at the spray of roses in her hair, and with a shrewd smile, said:

"I suppose from these indications that all is settled between you. I am glad that the cloud has passed away from you, my dear children, and that the sun is shining on you both again. I am sure you will be happy together, for you love each other with the true love."

"Thank you, grandma," said Spencer. "It is settled that Marion and I are to take each other for better for worse whenever Ray comes back to claim his bride. You are the only one of my relations who will bid us God speed; but your approbation is worth that of all the rest."

"Thank you, my son. You know that I have always loved Marion, and wished to see her your wife. If I could have given you the means of independence, Herbert, you know that I would have done so, and have had you married before she ever went on that unfortunate southern journey. However, all is well that ends well; the evil days are over, and the bright ones have dawned."

She tenderly kissed the bride elect, and added:

"The flowers are better suited to your youth and beauty than that ugly cap, and Herbert was quite right to make you throw it aside."

"I am so glad you approve. I—I was afraid that you might comment unfavorably on what this tyrannical man made me do," said Marion, with her mobile face sparkling with joy.

"Well, he is a tyrant, but he will be a very tender one to you, my dear, for the poor boy was wretched enough when he thought he had lost you forever."

"I managed to live through it though," said Spencer lightly. "I wore the willow ungracefully enough, I dare say; but at least I escaped its tendrils waving o'er my lonely grave. But if Marion plays the deuce again, I won't answer for consequences."

Marion slid her hand in his, and whispered:

"Aunt Carrie sha'n't part us again, I promise you that, Herbert. I am going to live near her, but I am armed at all points now."

"I shall have two charming granddaughters," said Mrs. Spencer, smiling. "In your different styles, you and Estelle are strongly contrasted, but you are both very attractive women."

"You are then prepossessed in Estelle's favor?" asked Spencer, with a sly glance at his betrothed.

"I was that before I saw her, and I must say, that in spite of her depression and fatigue, I found her lovely in person, and I know that the mind within corresponds with the outer seeming."

"You hear that, Marion? I declare, grandma, you are a second Daniel, and I heartily concur with your judgment."

"I hope that Marion found nothing to disapprove in Raymond's betrothed?" asked the old lady.

Mrs. Oliver flushed, but before she could reply, Spencer said:

"Oh, nothing to signify; but you know women are nothing if not critical of each other."

"I will find means to pay you for that," said Marion, as the three went in.

It was past mid-day when Hester awoke, and for a few moments she could not remember what had happened to her, or how she came to be in this strange room; but she soon regained complete control of herself, and she felt strengthened for what lay before her.

She arose, rung the bell, and when the tidy servant girl entered, asked if her trunk had arrived. She was told that it was already in a small dressing-room opening from one side of her chamber; and the girl unclosed the door, and explained that it had been taken in there while she slept, through a door communicating with the back room.

Martha then asked:

"Shall I bring you some lunch now, Miss? You were sleeping so soundly when Mrs. Spencer looked in, that she would not have you disturbed; but she had something nice and hot kept for you."

"I am much obliged to her, I am sure. I feel as if I can eat now, and you may bring me a cup of tea. My head aches yet, and that may do it some good. Say to Mrs. Spencer, if you please, that I shall not be able to appear again to-day. I shall lie down again directly."

The message was duly taken, and Martha returned in a short time with a waiter on which a most appetizing luncheon was placed. She was followed by Mrs. Oliver, who said:

"Pray excuse my intrusion, Miss Landry; but Mrs. Spencer is taking her afternoon siesta, and I thought it would be discourteous to leave you alone in a strange house for so many hours."

With her brightest smile, Hester held out her hand, and said:

"Intrusion indeed! I shall be charmed to have you come to me at any and all hours. We are to be friends and comrades, you know, and I insist that our intimacy shall commence by laying aside formality, and addressing each other by our baptismal names. I am Estelle to you, and you are Marion to me; shall it not be so?"

Disarmed by this apparent friendliness, Mrs. Oliver blushed when she recalled what she had that morning said, and she warmly replied:

"I am quite ready to meet your advances half way. Fate seems to decree that we shall be friends, and I accept your offers in good faith. I hope that we shall be able to find something pleasant in our relations toward each other."

"Of course we shall. You are to be as a sister to me, and I shall be delighted to claim you as such. Clarice is so much younger than I am, that she could not be the companion I have often yearned for. Oh, you don't know how eagerly I welcomed the suggestion of Herbert when he spoke of you; nor how glad I was to know that I could secure a widow who was still young, for my companion. Since you have been married, Mrs. De Lorme cannot cavil at my choice of a chaperon. It sounds absurd to speak of such a youthful looking creature as you are, in such a character as that; doesn't it, now?"

Marion's silvery laughter rippled out at this, and she felt her subtle intuitions giving way before the charm of Hester's manner. She said:

"Mrs. De Lorme will speak her opinion, nevertheless, when she finds that I am to reside with you. I think, however, that together we shall prove more than a match for her, though she once had me so completely under her thumb that she made me do a thing that I shall repent of as long as I live."

Martha had drawn up a small table to the side of the sofa, and spread a snowy napkin over it; she placed the waiter upon it, and Mrs. Oliver seated herself opposite her new friend, and told the maid to open one of the window-blinds. She then dismissed her, saying that she would wait on the guest herself. When the girl was gone, Hester sipped the fragrant tea poured out for her, and renewed the conversation. She looked steadily at Mrs. Oliver, and frankly said:

"I was afraid that you did not like me as well as you thought you would, after hearing so much of me from Raymond. I read something in your eyes which told me that you were disappointed. Tell me in what I fell short of your ideal. The poor boy is so much in love with me, that I dare say he represented me as an angel minus the wings, and you see I am only a mortal, after all."

Mrs. Oliver blushed deeply, and with some embarrassment, replied:

"I am sure that I now find you a very charming mortal, whatever I may have thought this morning. Ray has told me a great deal about you, and I had fancied you a little different, that is all. But you were so tired this morning that you were unable to show what you really are."

"Pray tell me wherein I fell short of Ray's description. I am curious to know."

"The sweet grace of manner he dwelt most on, I missed in our first interview, but I do so no longer. 'Richard's himself again,' and I confess that I was too precipitate in my judgment. I thought you meant to play the part of the condescending patroness, but I see that I was mistaken, and I beg your pardon for the injustice."

"Really, Marion, did you think that I could be so vulgarly impertinent as that? I know that I have many faults, but lack of consideration for others is not one of them, I hope. Besides, by what right should I treat with condescension one who is my equal in every respect, save the accident of fortune, and who is at no very distant day to become the wife of Herbert Spencer?"

"He has told you then! Really your intimacy must have progressed very rapidly, to come to such a climax as that in so short a time."

"We were thrown together under peculiar circumstances, remember, and when he spoke of you as my future friend and companion, I divined how deep was his own interest in my acceptance of you in that character, and I asked him if it was not so. He told me of his attachment to you, and declared his intention to ask you to share his future life. You have discarded your widow's cap, I perceive; you wear flowers in your hair, and a knot of colored ribbon on your breast. Of course that can mean but one thing: Herbert has spoken, and you have answered him favorably."

Marion looked at the speaker with dilating eyes, and presently said:

"You must be clairvoyant, for one would think that you had been present in spirit this morning when I talked with Herbert. It is true that I wear these things at his request, and I have promised to marry him when you and Raymond are united. That cannot be for many months yet though."

"I do not pretend to second sight," said Hester, smiling softly on her *vis-a-vis*, "but I am observant, and I draw inferences from trifles which many others would scarcely notice. Herbert is a noble fellow, and merits the happiness he has won. He must not get impatient if Ray delays his return, and ask me to give you up before it will be proper for me to do without a lady friend in the house with me."

"Oh, he will not do that; but he insists that Raymond will be among us by Christmas at the very latest, and he may even come before that."

"If he does, I shall welcome him with my whole heart; but I shall write to him to-morrow to finish his tour before he comes for me. He is certain of me, for he knows how tenderly I love him; so why should he risk his mother's displeasure by rushing across the Atlantic before he has half seen the countries she insisted on his visiting? Mrs. De Lorme *would* make him go abroad, and now I shall counsel him to stay the year out, at least."

"He will not accept your counsel; nor can you wish him to do it, if you really love him. Raymond will come back for you, and finish his tour in your company. He went away very reluctantly, and he will avail himself of the first excuse to get back again."

"Yes, poor boy, he tore himself from me with such bitter regret that I was almost tempted to go with him even without my father's consent," said Hester pensively. "I am glad now that I did not do so, for if—if this calamity had happened when I was far away, I should never have forgiven myself. It is hard enough to bear as it is, without the addition of self-reproach."

She covered her face with her hands, seeming to shudder over the memories that arose before her.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

—A good moral character is the first essential in a man. It is therefore highly important to endeavor not only to be learned, but to be virtuous.

THE RAIN HAS COME!

BY GEORGE W. BUNGAY.

It *will* rain, and rain in due time; that may always be depended upon. Such a thing as a general failure of crops in this part of the world, from drought or any other cause, is unknown. In the product of some particular article, as hay, or corn, or wheat, or oats, there is occasionally a great difference, in seasons, and more or less variance in the general average; but we always have enough of something.—*Editorial from the New York Ledger.*

The modest grass, the wilted weeds,
Fling out their green arms with delight;
Young plants look from the shells of seeds
To welcome the soft rain and light.
The quickened sap runs through the reeds,
And jewelled blossoms cheer the sight.

The languid brooklet swells its strain,
And runs rejoicing to the sea;
The music of its glad refrain
Is sweet as rythmic harmony:
It is the chorus of the rain,
Which fell in drops of melody.

That all may have their daily bread
In this exalted land of ours;
That all may find a table spread,
Down comes the rain in precious showers.
Swing censer cups of gold and red,
The fragrant praise of summer flowers!

The arching sky, with blessings bowed,
Draws near in storms to bless the world.
Up where the thunders volleyed loud,
And the lightning's fiery lance was hurled
Upon the gray walls of the cloud,
The bow of promise is unfurled.

Our Heavenly Father, who unbars
The golden windows of the sky,
And with his mighty thunder jars
The worlds below and realms on high,
Lights up a universe of stars,
That we may know that He is nigh.

ENGAGED TO MR. HOLLY.

BY MARY KYLE DALLAS.

When I first started in life, it was as salesman in the very small establishment of Mr. Brusle, stationer. It was not a very remunerative situation, but old Mr. Brusle was a kind old man, Mrs. Brusle a nice, talkative old lady, and Dolly Brusle often came into the store on busy days and stood behind the counter beside me; and just for this last reason I would not have taken double wages with Mr. Throgmorton, the only other stationer of the town—not that he offered them, truth compels me to add.

Dear little Dolly! she had brown eyes and a dimple in her chin, and she sang like a prima donna. She had had lessons from a German Fraulein and from an Italian Signor; and the old man quite forgot Throgmorton and his gilt gingerbread window when he sat with his handkerchief over his head of an evening and listened to her songs. The piano was old and tinkling, but none of us ever thought of that. It was sing this and sing that, and "let us have that over again," until the clock struck eleven sometimes; then I was obliged to go. Old Mr. Brusle and my father had been friends, and I was not a clerk only, but a privileged friend as well, and all the excuse I needed for coming every night was given in the words, "I want to hear the singing." Well, any one might have wanted to hear it, for that matter—not merely a boy who was in love.

Things went on in this way for three years, when, one afternoon, old Mr. Brusle, shutting the drawer of his desk with a bang, said:

"It's no use, Tom, I may as well give in. Throgmorton has beaten me. I'm not making a cent, and I shall break up business. The old woman and I can manage on what we have, with only one child, and I can rest and stop fidgeting. I suppose Dolly can teach a little, too. There's no other music teacher in Hamilton, now that Fraulein Hulse has gone back to Germany, and she can have some finery in that way. But the old shop is a mockery, and I've known it a good while."

So that was the end of that Arcadian time. The stock and fixtures were sold out. Throgmorton bought the stock, and the shop was altered into a parlor; and I wrote to my uncle in New York, who had promised to take me into his business if I wished it, and he telegraphed, "Come next week." And then one day I asked Dolly to walk down into the meadows and see if the blackberries were ripe.

We took two little baskets, and the berries were hanging plump and large and purple-black; but before we picked one, I drew her to a quiet place under a great maple and put my arm about her waist, and said:

"Dolly, you know just how I feel to you, don't you? You know I love you."

She nestled up to me a little closer, and I took both her tiny, plump brown hands in mine.

"Will you wait for me a little while, Dolly?" I said. "Will you think that I am doing my best all the time to bring the day nearer when I can ask your father to give you to me?"

She said nothing for a while, and in the pause I heard a bird sing a whole song through. Then, sweeter than any birds sing, came her voice:

"Yes, Tom, I'll wait."

And then we picked the blackberries, and went home again through the meadows.

"We'll not speak of it yet, Tom," said Dolly. "At home I mean; they think me such a child yet. I don't want to break the charm. In time they'll guess that I'm a woman; and they like you, Tom."

The evening passed swiftly. I arose to go. "God bless you!" said the old man. The old lady kissed me. I pressed my lips to Dolly's forehead. In that moment of parting the old folks thought it only natural. And then I was gone—down the little street with its semi-detached cottages, out into the country road. My trunk had been at the station for hours. I heard the whistle of the train; I saw the red glare of the iron monster's eye; I heard the snort and the tramp. He was ready for me, and the city and its whirl awaited me.

For a while I was bewildered in the city, then very busy, then flushed with the prospect of being rapidly advanced, and of being able to ask Dolly to be my wife sooner than I expected. I wrote her joyous letters. She wrote pleasant ones back to me. We did not make them open love-letters, but both understood the love at the bottom of them. And so the months glided by. For six I had no holiday. Then a grudgingly given week was given me, and I hurried down to Hamilton. I visited my old friends, and had a glorious time. Dolly was lovelier than ever. She walked over to the depot with me when I left, leaning on my arm. The train had not come in yet—the one for New York; but the other had set down some passengers from the city. One, a stout gentleman of thirty-five, dressed in fine style, having given his portmanteau to a porter, advanced to Dolly.

"How do you do, Miss Brusle?" said he.

She held out her hand shyly.

"How do you do, Mr. Holly? Tom, this is Mr. Holly. Mr. Holly, Mr. Hearn."

He bowed; so did I. But the fellow had such an air with him that I hated him. How did she know him? I had never seen him before.

"Who is he?" asked I, in a whisper, as the porter called Mr. Holly back for directions.

"He has something to do with the opera, I think," said Dolly.

Then came the shriek of the whistle at the depot. On thundered the cars.

"All aboard for New York!" yelled a voice.

"Good-bye, Tom," said Dolly.

"Good-bye!" said I; but I stared at Mr. Holly.

"You'll be left, Tom," said Dolly.

I hurried away. I found a seat. I thrust my head out of the window. Dolly was walking away on Mr. Holly's arm, and his head was very close to hers—very.

I made a fool of myself next day. I wrote Dolly an indignant letter. She wrote me a spirited answer. I demanded an explanation as to how she came to know Holly, in the next; and before any answer came to this, old Mrs. Brusle walked into our place with her shopping bag in her hand, one morning.

"I want you to take me to some nice store, Tom," she said, "if you can spare an hour or so. I'm going to buy a black silk for Dolly, and she told me to tell you all about it, as you seemed to be upset."

I asked the permission necessary, and called a carriage. Once within it, the old lady began:

"You see, Dolly will need to be dressed handsomely. She starts next month."

"Starts for where?" said I.

"All over, mostly," said the old lady. "It's all settled, you know, between her and Mr. Holly."

"Settled!" cried I.

"Yes," said the old lady. "I knew you'd be pleased with the good news. She was singing in the choir, and he happened to go there to church, and he asked an introduction and got it, and called next day. It's very sudden, very; but she wouldn't engage herself to him without our consent; and it's such a fine thing, that we can't refuse; so we've consented. She'll feel homesick, no doubt, away from us; but we mustn't think of that. I try not to;" and then the old lady put her kerchief to her eyes.

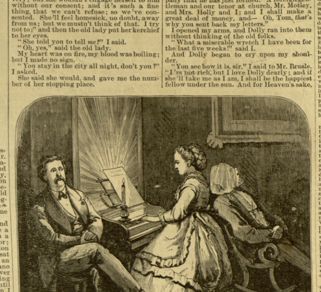
"She told you to tell *me*?" I said.

"Oh, yes," said the old lady.

My heart was on fire, my blood was boiling; but I made no sign.

"You stay in the city all night, don't you?" I asked.

She said she would, and gave me the number of her stopping place.



After the shopping was over, I went home and took from my trunk a little parcel of letters, a lock of hair, a ribbon—Heaven knows what trashy bits of love treasure—put them in a large business envelope, and walked over to the old lady's boarding-house with them.

"Tell Dolly that I sent her that, and wish her all the happiness that she deserves," said I.

The old lady heard no sarcasm in my voice.

"I will, Tom," she said; "and do come to see us soon. We'll be lonely without Dolly."

So it was over; and the thing that was most terrible to dream of had fallen on me, and I lived. And Dolly wrote no letter, and made no sign. It was as though she were dead, and she was dead to me.

Of course I made no confidence, and I worked as hard as ever. The work of a wholesale woolen house does not slacken because a clerk is crossed in love or jilted. Bales and boxes and bundles went out and came in all the same; and what did it matter if I looked pale and lost my appetite, so that I did my figuring and writing and all the rest of it correctly?

But one day, as I looked up from a box I had been marking, I saw a sight that made me sick with rage. Holly, and no one else, with his light side whiskers and his glossy hat and marvelously square shoulders. He was talking to my uncle, and appeared to be on intimate terms with him. I stood still and stared at him. In a few moments he saw me, and putting up his eye-glass, bowed. I made no bow in return. Then he came across the room.

"I don't think it's a mistake," said he. "I met you at the depot at Hamilton, with Miss Brusle."

"I remember," I said.

"She's very well, and in a little flutter of course," said he. "I suppose you've had letters?"

"Excuse me. I'm needed elsewhere," I said, and dashed away.

An hour after, my uncle coming across me, said:

"So you know Holly, Tom? He's not a bad fellow, though a bit of a puppy. He's made a good deal of money in the theatrical line; manager and all that, you know. Married a sort of cousin of my wife's two years ago, so we're a little sociable."

"Is he a married man?" I asked.

"Oh, yes; why not?" said my uncle.

"Uncle Harold," said I, "you must let me run up to Hamilton to-night. It's a life and death matter; I must go."

"What is the matter, Tom?" said my uncle.

"I can't tell you," said I; "but I *must* go."

"Then you *must*," said my uncle; "but if it wasn't you, you'd never come back. Don't be longer than you can help, as it is."

If he had but known how long every moment seemed to me, he might have spared the warning.

I travelled on the night train, and reached the dear little brown cottage when its windows were golden in the sunrise. The old lady was getting breakfast. Dolly was milking the cow; her father at work in the garden. It was a sweet picture, and I had come to turn its joy into sorrow; but better that, than to let worse sorrow come. I can truly say that I, as much as might be, forgot myself in that moment.

"You, Tom?" cried Mrs. Brusle. "Why, Tom!" cried the old lady; "so you thought you'd see our girl off after all? You know she starts to-morrow?"

Dolly did not look at me, but I saw her face flush crimson.

"I'm sorry to say that I have come down to bring bad news," said I.

"Bad news!" said Mr. Brusle. "I'm sorry for that, my boy. What is it?"

"It affects you, sir," said I; "not me. Yes, Dolly, it is true; and ill as you have used me, my heart bleeds for you. I come only because worse would happen if I were silent, and I beg you to believe that I am actuated by no spirit of revenge. You may not credit me, but I wish that any other man had this to do. Mr. Holly is, and has been for two full years, a married man."

I turned my face away from Dolly as I uttered these words, and dropped it upon the hand that rested on the vine trellis. I expected to hear her scream, or to see her faint, but my news did not seem to produce as great an effect as I expected. I looked up again; all eyes were fixed upon me.

"Ah!" said the old man.

"Well?" said the old lady.

"Go on, Tom," said Dolly.

"His wife is a cousin of the lady my uncle married," said I. "If you don't believe me, I can offer proof of the fact. He is married."

"Of course I knew *that*," said Dolly. "His wife is quite a celebrated contralto."

"Knew that he was a married man?" said I. "I don't understand you. What can this mean?"

"And it's a great deal nicer for Dolly," said Mrs. Brusle. "Mrs. Holly and she will travel together. But, O dear! perhaps Mrs. Holly isn't nice. Is *that* it?"

I stared from one to the other.

"Mrs. Brusle," said I, "what did you tell me when you came down to New York? As I understood you, that Dolly was engaged to Mr. Holly, and that you were buying the wedding dresses."

"Gracious me!" cried the old lady. "Nothing of the sort."

"Did you think *that*, Tom?" cried Dolly.

I asked her to explain.

"Oh, dear me! Why, Tom, I have engaged to travel with him as one of a quartette company that he has just formed. A foreign gentleman and our tenor at church, Mr. Motley, and Mrs. Holly and I; and I shall make a great deal of money, and— Oh, Tom, *that's* why you sent back my letters."

I opened my arms, and Dolly ran into them without thinking of the old folks.

"What a miserable wretch I have been for the last five weeks!" said I.

And Dolly began to cry upon my shoulder.

"You see how it is, sir," I said to Mr. Brusle. "I'm not rich, but I love Dolly dearly; and if she'll take me as I am, I shall be the happiest fellow under the sun. And for Heaven's sake, Dolly, don't mind breaking your engagement with that fellow. Stay at home, and sing to us. I don't want you running about the country, no matter how much money you make by it."

So the engagement was broken; and though my uncle said it was most imprudent, Dolly and I were married that winter.

SCIENCE.

The Biblical story of the Moabites who mistook water for blood, related in the twenty-second chapter of the second book of Kings, is the subject of a communication to the *Athenæum* by Mr. E. L. Garbett, who, after stating that few tales ever seemed to him more mythical, says, "One morning, however, last winter, I started by the early train from London into Hampshire, and on entering the water-meads of either the Wandle or the Mole, was startled by the sight, as it seemed, of a pool of blood, too large to be that of any single animal. The next moment, perceiving all the ditches and pools for some hundred yards to be equally tinged, I looked round for the new chemical factory or dye-house that I supposed must have arisen, and be polluting them with its refuse. But as the advance of the train brought a mile or two of the valley into view, with a rather unusual amount of water, beyond it was one of those red sunrises, happily very rare, which in this climate, so far as my experience goes, invariably announce a whole day of violent storms. Of course the distant waters, reflecting the red light brightly, destroyed the illusion of the foreground ones; but as long as these alone were visible, I had made the identical mistake recorded of the Moabites, and could not deny that localities were easily conceivable where this very sunrise would probably have led a far from uncivilized battalion into some such disastrous excitement."

It is a mistake to suppose that pork is the only meat liable to be infested by worms. Dr. Cobbold, in his recent lectures on helminthology—the natural history of worms, from the Greek *helmis* a worm, and *logos* a discourse—says that larval tape-worms occur in the most esteemed kinds of animal food, including both beef and mutton. He advises all persons who suspect they have eaten diseased or trichinised meat to lose no time in seeking able medical advice, as although it is possible to expel the trichina worms from the system when they have gone no further than the intestinal canal, all efforts to get rid of them after they have made their way into the muscles have thus far proved ineffectual, and the patient invariably dies.

A very remarkable theory in regard to the origin of cholera has been submitted to the Russian Imperial Academy of Sciences. It is, that cholera is intimately connected with auroral displays and solar disturbances, so that the epidemics of the disease occur at periods bearing an unvarying relation to the maximum and minimum periods of the prevalence of sun-spots. This view is entirely at variance, we believe, with that entertained by the medical profession generally.

The volcanoes of Auvergne, in France, according to geologists, have never been active in historic times. Mr. W. J. Green of Cork, however, writes to *Nature* to say that rogation days were appointed by Mamercus, Bishop of Vienne, in Gaul, about A. D. 460, for the purpose of chanting litanies to stay the volcanic eruptions which were then devastating his diocese.

A new hypothesis as to the cause of solar heat has been advanced by Mr. Maxwell Hall, and is attracting considerable attention. He conjectures that the heat radiated into space is the result of a gradual contraction in the sun's bulk, which, however, is so small in comparison to the entire mass of the sun, that no diminution will be visible for many ages.

A letter from Persia, lately read before the Geological Society, describes a series of earthquakes in North-western Khorassan last winter, whereby, according to a careful estimate, thirty thousand lives must have been lost. Four forts near the town of Khabooshan were so completely buried that no trace of them can now be seen.

A substance which it is believed may become to some extent a substitute for cotton, was exhibited at a meeting of the Linnean Society in May. It was sent to Mr. Miers by the government of Brazil, and is produced by a climbing plant of unknown relationship, but frequent occurrence. The fibre is strong and silky.

During the entire continuance of the recent grand eruption of Mount Vesuvius, Prof. Palmieri remained courageously at his post in the neighboring observatory, to watch the phenomena and keep a record of them for the benefit of science.

The *Westminster Review* notices a so-called scientific work, recently published, which maintains that the earth is a plane, with the sun, moon and stars at a comparatively small elevation above it!

The leading scientific men of France have formed a society similar to the British and American Associations for the Advancement of Science.

A circumnavigation expedition for the scientific exploration of the deep sea is to be sent out this year by the British Admiralty.

Microscopic diamonds have been discovered in a new locality in the Ural mountains, called Achamstowsk.

The first number of a journal of science in the Bengali language has recently been issued in British India.

NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

A DESPAIRING WIFE says: "I have been married but a few years, and am very unhappy indeed. At times I wish I could die. The trouble is my husband's violent temper. He does not drink any kind of strong drink, but he gets angry at me if I ask him where he has been, when he stays out late. He says a woman has no right to ask such questions. Oh! he gets *so* angry, and knocks lamps off the table, smashes windows, and tears clothes all to pieces, and destroys anything he can get hold of! And he swears so, there is no telling how awful it is. If I cry, he says it is because I hate him, and want to get away from him; and he tells me to go—that he would be glad to get rid of me. But God knows how I love him, and how it pains me to have him talk so to me. We have been brought up very differently. My folks were all Christian people, and his were irreligious, Sabbath-breaking people. So I am willing to make all allowances for his conduct. But it does seem as if he was old enough to see the folly of it. When he is so angry I try not to say a word, but bear it patiently, which only makes him madder yet, and he says I am only deceiving him; but what he means I don't know. Mother is dead, but father comes to see me sometimes, and I always praise my darling up to him, and let him think we live very happily, for it would almost break his heart to see me unhappy. Now don't think my husband is bad *all the time*, for when he is good-natured, there could not be a better man; and then he is so sorry for what he has done that he asks my forgiveness, and promises never to do so any more. But the least thing will set him agoing, and every time he grows worse and worse, and for that reason I come to you as the only one that I dare tell. And may God prosper and help you on, if you can only help me out of my trouble, and tell me what to do; for I want to live happily, and live together till death shall part us. Now *do* please answer this in your Notices to Correspondents, and confer a lasting blessing on a poor despairing wife." You must be as patient and forbearing and loving as possible, and trust to time and your own sweet influences to work a change in your husband's temper. If what you say is true, he is a despicable, unmanly person, and needs a good deal of discipline to bring him up, mentally and morally, to the full stature of a respectable manhood. Do your best, looking above for help and guidance.

S. A. D. (New York) says: "Having been for many years a subscriber to your valuable paper, I trust you will forgive me for going to you for advice. Over five years since I married one whom I devotedly loved, but shortly after our marriage I could not say that I was agreeably disappointed. She was so unreasonably exacting, so selfish, and had such a temper, that after I had been married less than two years I ceased to love her. She then asked my forgiveness, and promised to do better. She was only a little better. She again promised to be a better wife, and do her duty. I again forgave her. During the past year she has been very good—at least as good as her impulsive and fretful nature will allow. I believe she now loves me a great deal, but unfortunately my love for her has never returned. Although I do all I can to make her contented, I am not happy myself. She says that I am the kindest and best of husbands, and that I am so as a matter of principle, as a sense of duty, but not from a feeling of love. This makes her unhappy. Can we not love again those whom we have ceased to love? What am I to do? I hope you will favor me with a reply." We should hear your wife's story, before coming to any conclusion. Your wife appears to do the best she can, according to your own account, and now that you have made her your wife, and put it out of her power to begin her life in any happier way, your duty is to love and cherish her. She should never have known your declining affection for her. The extreme probability is that there has been mischief somewhere, of which you do not speak. Suppose you should find out that you did not love your child, what would you do?

LITTLE CHARLIE (New York) says: "I have been deeply interested in your correspondents' column, and would like to ask your advice. I have been a constant reader of your valuable and interesting paper for the last ten years, and in that time I have never bothered you before. I am a young man twenty-two years of age, and in a good business for myself. I am engaged to a young lady about the same age as myself, whom I love devotedly, and I know she reciprocates my love, and I intend to marry her in the course of a couple of months. But she has been keeping company lately with a girl whose character is none of the best, and I told her if she does not give up her company I shall have to break our engagement, even if it should break my heart, and she says she will be entirely guided by your answer, whether she should give up her company or not, for my parents would not allow me to marry her if they knew she kept such company. Mr. Editor, I pray you do not throw this idly in your waste basket, for the happiness of two souls depends on your answer, and I shall be ever grateful to you for your answer." We think it is the duty of the young lady, having engaged to marry you, to defer to your wishes in this matter. She should of course withdraw from the society of this girl in so quiet a way that, if there is no real cause for imputation, it may not be countenanced by the withdrawal.

S. L. (Cincinnati) says: "Being a constant reader of your valuable paper for a long time, and having never troubled you before, I take the liberty of doing so to-day. My friends and myself had a little dispute about some matter of etiquette, and will leave it only for you to decide. The case is this: If a young man meets one of his male friends at the Park, walking with two young ladies, some evening, and is introduced to one of them and spends the rest of the evening with her, and naturally sees her home; and the young lady, while parting, invites the young man to call and see her; now would it be proper for the young man to do so, without being acquainted with her parents or any of her family? By accommodating me with a speedy answer, you will greatly oblige." Divested of all extraneous circumstances, your question comes to this: Is the invitation to call from a respectable young lady to be accepted by a gentleman? We should say, Yes; because the gentleman is bound to assume that she acts with the sanction of her parents. Whether she acts wisely or not in giving such invitations is another matter.

GERTRUDE D. (Hartford) says: "I have come to you for advice for the first time; so please do not throw this in your waste basket without a moment's notice, will you? Do you think canvassing for books a good employment for a lady? If so, what book would you recommend? Also, how should she introduce herself and book to the lady of the house where she calls? If you will only answer these questions in your next paper, you will confer a very great favor upon a constant reader of your very valuable paper." There is no reason why a lady should not offer books for sale, like any other wares; but going from house to house, and being obliged to introduce one's self, are circumstances rather against canvassing as employment for a lady. Of course we cannot name a book, because localities, and times, and men have their favorite books; and a lady must introduce herself as calling on her own business, and having no right to the time of those on whom she calls.

MODESTY (Baltimore) says: "Is there any way to correct a bold and conspicuous walk or carriage without the appearance of too great restraint or stiffness? I am of a peculiarly sensitive nature, and the fact that my walk attracts the attention and sometimes ridicule of the strangers I encounter, keeps me in misery all the time. I am otherwise not unlike other young men of my station. If you can suggest any exercise by which the difficulty may be overcome, I will gladly follow your suggestion." Do not think much of how you walk, or of how you seem to strangers. If you have gone through the streets like a locomotive, moderate your pace, and do not knock any one down. If you have carried your head as if you were looking for a comet in the zenith, lower your gaze to the level of average human eyes. No one in fact can give you any recipe that your own wisdom may not suggest, and no one can reform you but through that effort which you only can make.

READER (Cadiz, Ky.) says: "Do you think it is in good taste for ladies to receive company on Sunday evening? Please answer, and oblige." The Christian belief is that the Sunday is to be devoted to religious uses, except so far as works of necessity and mercy require to be done. Business and pleasure appear to be excluded by that rule. If ladies receive visits, gentlemen will pay them, and the tendency of the custom will be to lessen the distinction between the Sunday and the week-day. But upon that distinction depends in a great degree the religious use of the day, and the wisest men and the hardest workers have found its observance conducive to the health of body, brain, and heart.

HONOR says: "I have been a reader of your valuable paper for a number of years, and have never asked a question till now. I am in love with a young lady, and I know my love is reciprocated; but we are both young, and not in fit circumstances to marry yet. What do you think I had better do?—stop waiting on her for the present, or tell her how I feel, and find if she is willing to wait? I do not believe in long courtships, but am willing to wait any length of time for her." You had better inquire, we think, if she is willing to wait with you? It would be rather hard to leave her "reciprocating" and say nothing, would it not?

C. F. M. (Boston) says: "Will you, through your valuable paper, please inform me whether it is the duty of the youngest son to support his parents after attaining his majority; or is it the combined duty of all the children? Please don't lay this away, but answer it as soon as convenient." It is no more the duty of the youngest son, than it is the duty of all the children, to support helpless parents. Such a duty should be lovingly and gladly shared by all the members of the family.

O. W. (Kansas City) says: "Will you please answer this question for me? Is it right, and according to law, for a man who has been separated from his wife for a good cause for seven years, to marry again? And is a divorce necessary? By answering, you will oblige a very ignorant person." A man cannot divorce himself and marry again. He is not the judge of a "good cause." The only legal evidence of the cause being good, and of his right to marry again, is a legal divorce.

JUEL (Council Bluffs) says: "I heard, during a conversation a few days ago, the expression, 'While I was learning my occupation.' Please inform me, through your answers to correspondents, if the word 'occupation' is correctly used?" No. "Occupation" had better be profession, or trade, or business. Occupation does not necessarily imply learning.

CONSTANT READER says: "Can either white or black, properly speaking, be called colors? Answer, and oblige." There are three primary colors: red, blue and yellow; and three secondary: violet, orange and green. Black and white are not of these, and so cannot *technically* be called colors. Popularly, of course, they can be so spoken of.

PLANET says: "Will you please answer through your Notices to Correspondents whether the weight of the world has ever been estimated, and if so, what it is?" It has been estimated repeatedly and variously; but we have never been so satisfied of the accuracy and importance of any result as to make a note of it.

E. S. (New York) says: "I am sadly worried as to my duty to my parents and to my lover, to both of whom I am attached, and come to you for advice. I am twenty-two years of age, and last year promised to marry a worthy young man two years my senior, who loves me dearly, and whose love I have of late years, after mature deliberation, allowed to bind my heart to him. I have known him for seven years, and in that time have never seen nor heard of anything disreputable in his conduct. For some unaccountable reason my mother became prejudiced against him, and my father, noticing our growing intimacy, forbid me his company. On my lover hearing of this, he asked me if my father's action would govern my own, and on my answering in the negative, we made mutual vows of love. Shortly after he called on my father and told him of our engagement, asking his sanction and challenging investigation of his character and precedents, telling my father that if he gave him any fair reason he would withdraw his suit. On his leaving, my father told me I could make a much better match by waiting, and live a life of ease, and through threats finally obtained my promise to break my engagement. On meeting my lover accidentally some time after, I found I could not bear to break my engagement with him, but told him about my father's action, and renewed my promises of fidelity. My father is of poor family, but has had the fortune to become very wealthy, and is now proud, and I find that it is his idea to sacrifice my love to make a marriage to satisfy his ambition. My lover is greatly vexed at the poor treatment received at my father's hands, and wishes me to leave my home and marry him, if my father, after again addressing him, does not show better cause for his objecting to our marriage, as he is of moderate means and well able to support me as well as people of middling circumstances. What would you advise me to do, or tell my lover?" As you are only twenty-two and your lover but two years older, you can well enough afford to wait for your parents' approval, for a year or two, at least. Even though they are not infallible, their sanction is worth seeking in all reasonable ways.

MAC (Fort McPherson, Neb.) says: "Through the medium of your answers to correspondents, please inform me what the chances are for obtaining employment in the States as a phonographer? I was induced to undertake this study some months ago, with the hope that it would, if acquired, enable me to obtain employment and the means of living after my discharge from the army. I am now told by a gentleman who should know, that the supply of phonographers vastly exceeds the demand; that they find it extremely difficult to obtain permanent employment; that the salary paid is usually low; and that as an occupation, shorthand will not repay me for the time and labor devoted to its acquirement. My service during the past four years in New Mexico and Arizona will, I hope, excuse my ignorance in this matter, and justify me in asking for a little light on the subject from your paper, before devoting another year's study uselessly." We feel interest in you, and respect for you, and so reply very plainly. You write a good hand; you need to revise your spelling. We never remember to have seen acquired as "accuired" before. But this is your only slip. Mere phonography amounts to little; but along with "snap," quickness, good sense, power of condensation, and general knowledge, it is a valuable power, and we believe finds good remuneration and steady employment. A good reporter requires very varied knowledge.

B. M. B. says: "I am a young man aged twenty-three, the only child of a very wealthy gentleman, and at his death I shall become heir of all my father's wealth. I have been a reader of the *Ledger* for about three years, and the confidence I have in your judgment prompts me to ask advice from you, as I hardly like to trust any personal friend with my secret. What I want advice from you about is this: I have been a flirt all my life, until lately I have reformed, but I fear too late. I have been making frequent visits to two of the most accomplished young ladies in this place, and in my foolishness have engaged myself to both. They are of good family, and quite spirited in disposition. I love those girls with all my heart. I love one no better than the other. I am sure if I make choice of one, that the other will come on me for breach of promise, as it is very frequently done. I hardly know what to do. Will you please inform me of what I am waiting to know in your next paper?" You are a selfish and mean-spirited person, on your own showing, and are not worthy of the love of any woman. We hope both of the young ladies to whom you refer will find you out, and that neither of them will ever have the misfortune to become your wife.

READER (St. Louis) says: "A gentleman says that Mr. Beecher—Henry Ward—owns the church in which he preaches, rents the pews, and has the money. I deny it, and say that his salary is $20,000 a year. Who is right?" Your friend is in error. Mr. Beecher has a salary, and we happen to know that it is larger than he wished it to be. But suppose he did own the building, etc.? Had he put the same amount of brain and labor into a newspaper, or a school, or a dry-goods' house, and sold the products, would anybody have found fault with him for owning his own lot? What is the meaning of this credulous criticism of every public man in the country? Is any honest public servant overpaid? The rule of the Bible is, that they who sow spiritual things should reap carnal. If any one of a hundred men that we could name be worth forty thousand a year to the world, what is the worth of a man like Mr. Beecher?

A CONSTANT READER (New York) asks: "1st. Has Wendell Phillips' lecture on the 'Lost Arts' ever been published? and if so, where can I obtain a copy of it? 2d. Are the speeches made in the Senate and House of Representatives published in full through any newspaper medium, or in folio? If so, can I obtain copies of the same? What I wish to get is Mr. Sumner's speech delivered last week—Thursday, I think." 1st. We do not think Mr. Phillips has printed his lecture. It would then be "lost" in some degree, to him. He publishes it in his own way. 2d. All the speeches are supposed to be in the Congressional *Globe*, and we presume there will be no difficulty in obtaining Mr. Sumner's recent speech by application to the office of that paper.

W. L. (New York) says: "Will you oblige a constant reader with an answer to the following question: namely, A check is drawn to John Smith or bearer, and John Smith endorses it to John Brown. Now, I maintain that it is necessary for John Brown to endorse it before it will be paid, as Smith's endorsement of it to Brown makes it the same as a check drawn to order; while another party says that it is not necessary to have John Brown's endorsement, as it is payable to bearer. How is this?" Theoretically, the case you present raises a very nice question of law, which could only be determined by an adequate judicial decision. Practically, however, there is not much in it, as no prudent bank-teller would pay the check referred to, unless it were endorsed by John Brown.

ISABEL (Michigan) writes: "I am a young lady eighteen years of age. I have become acquainted with a young man two years my senior. For over a year back he has devoted himself entirely to me, and to no other girl, until recently; he goes with another young lady now. I asked him for an explanation. He did not answer. Do you think I did wrong in asking him?" No; but he did wrong in not answering, as well as in giving you occasion to ask the question. But we think that we can answer for him: that he has changed his mind, and you are probably fortunate in getting rid of such a fickle suitor.

E. S. (New Orleans) says: "On being introduced to a lady, how is one to learn the acceptable form of conversation, and how is one to go through a long dinner hour in conversation with some new lady acquaintance? How is one to learn what to talk about? I hear so much about the art of conversation, and have read them all, but can glean '*ne rien*.' I lose many pleasant opportunities; and a few words of instruction from you to one of your constant readers will not be ungrateful." The *art* of conversation consists in having something to say, and saying it in a natural way.

P. H. asks: "Is there any way for me to obtain a copy of the minutes of the convention of 1821, to revise the Constitution of the State of New York?" You may get track of the minutes of that convention by inquiring of the Secretary of State for the State of New York, at Albany, either personally or by letter.

YOUNG MAN (Scranton, Pa.) asks: "Is it proper for one gentleman to visit a lady at her residence with another gentleman without a previous introduction, the other gentleman being an acquaintance?" The gentleman who is acquainted with the lady should ask her permission to call with his friend.

T. F. (Decatur, Ill.) asks: "Should a young lady invite a young man whom she greatly esteems, to call again, as he takes his leave?" Not the first time that he calls. Young men know well enough whether their visits are welcome or not without being told.

A. W. M. (New Jersey) says she is very much in love with a young man and does not know whether he reciprocates it. She must wait patiently, and will find out in due time.

L. H. J. (New York) asks: "Could a foreigner be President of the United States?" No. It is provided in the Constitution that the President must be a native born citizen.

⁂ *Several letters stand over to be answered in our next.*

EXCUSED FOR CAUSE.

Capt. Tom Bugbee was out with his company on detached duty. In fact, he had two companies under his command. He had with him a small brass Napoleon and an ambulance. Captain Tom was a strict disciplinarian, but a convivial fellow withal, and fond of creature comforts, not many of which were obtainable in the wild country through which he was marching. The column had just left the small hamlet of Jasper's Cross-Roads, below Jacksonville, when the Captain observed that one of the drums was not beaten, and he directed a lieutenant to inquire the cause. The lieutenant sought the delinquent, and demanded to know why he was not beating time. The fellow nodded mysteriously, and whispered into the officer's ear,—

"I've got a pair of roasted chickens and two bottles of whiskey in my drum; and a chick and a bottle are for the Captain."

The lieutenant returned, and, in a whispered tone, reported to the Captain.

"Zounds!" cried Capt. Tom, with vehement sympathy, "why didn't the poor drummer tell us that his legs had given out? I don't want men to march if they're lame like that. Put him into the ambulance, sir!"

The drummer was consigned to the ambulance, and not long afterward Captain Tom and the lieutenant went to examine more particularly into the nature of his trouble. C.